

Imperial Angel

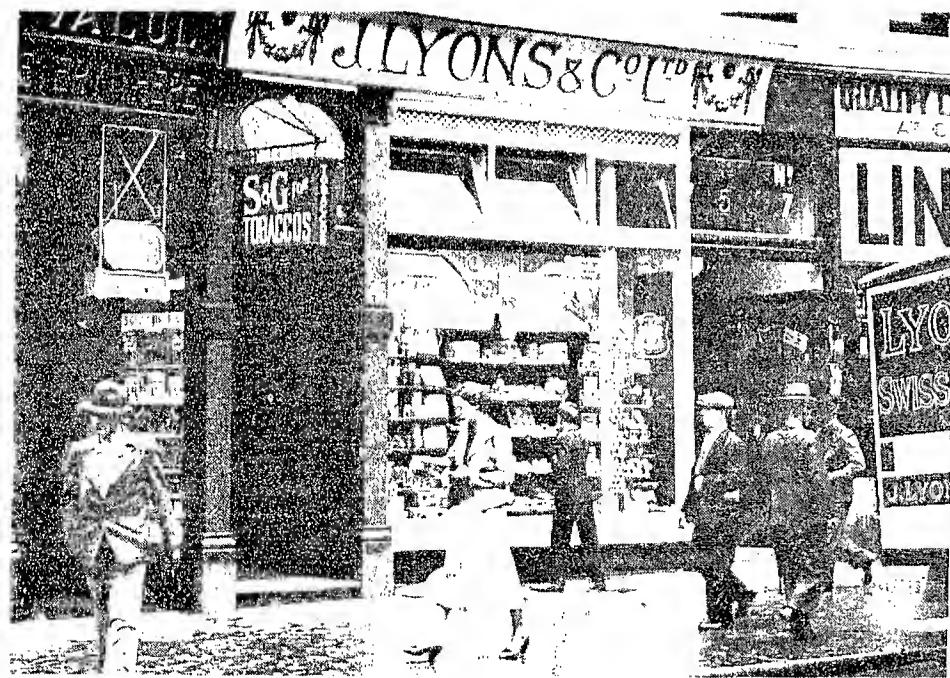
PRICE
1/-
IMPERIAL

ROMANTIA

OUR MAP OF A MAGICAL REALM
INSIDE



Miss Wonderful
BEGINS WITHIN!



TRINTITIA—WHERE STREETS ARE SANE AND PEOPLE UNPOISONED

provinces represent not only periods or "places" but also States of consciousness, forms of sensibility. As we explore each of the provinces both in psychic work and in the activity of our Romantian lives, we learn more about ourselves and the different possibilities within our own personalities. Usually you will find yourself drawn to some provinces more than others and perhaps you may settle with one or another as your "home" province—though you will find that all of them have things to offer you.

The five "modern" provinces in particular may sometimes seem rather trivial or superficial; but that is deceptive. They are still connected by a slender but unbreakable thread to the universal human tradition. Their distinct styles represent, in a way accessible to us (for we are still relatively close to them in time), universal aspects of the human soul. It is precisely in this that they differ from the world of the 1960s and after, for it was in the 1960s that this thread, this life-line between the modern world and the ancient wisdom—or, to put the same thing in a different way, between the outward forms of the society we live in and the fundamental realities of the human heart—was finally severed.

Often you will find that you go through

phases of development where you feel drawn to some provinces and quite closed to others; then, later, you may suddenly find that you "open up" to a province that had previously left you cold. You may become quite romantic about it, your heart warmed by its films, its music, its clothes and its whole style. This may become permanent, or more likely it will pass and you will return to your "home" provinces, but having gained a new dimension and a fresh understanding.

This is not to suggest that all the provinces are "equal" in value. Kadoria and Quirinelle, for example are certainly less pure—or, as we say, "staler"—than the other "modern" provinces, while Arcadia, both "hither" (meaning the Victorian and Edwardian periods and "further" (meaning older and more traditional eras) have greater depth than they;—but each one has its part to play in the making of Romantia and the development of the personality. A true understanding of Quirinelle is superior to a superficial understanding of the most traditional form of civilisation: and, indeed, it is true to say that if one cannot understand why Quirinelle or Vintesse is important and immeasurably superior to Babylon, one cannot yet have any true understanding of tradition in its deeper sense.

In practice you will find that each province deepens your understanding of the others, and that you will discover fresh facets of one province after another as you progress. Just as you think you know all about the sensibility of a particular province, some rich new vein will open before you.

Let us, then, take a brief tour through the provinces of Romantia and get an idea of the lands we shall explore and wherein we may make our homes.

THE HEART OF ROMANTIA

At the heart of Romantia is the province of Trintitia or Trent. For Romantia as a whole, the '30s are *now*—not the historical thirties, but the style and manner that we call Trent. There is an ambiguity about whether "the 30s" means the 1930s or the 2030s. That is why Novaria (where we find the 2030s) is one of the two closest provinces to Trintitia. They are separated only by a dotted line, which means that it is easy to slip over from one to another.

The other province which stands thus close to Trintitia is Vintesse, "the 20s". From the Romantian point of view Vintesse is even more up-to-date and new than Trintitia. The music is hotter, the clothes are more daring, everything is "younger" and less "grown-up" in Vintesse. No wonder Vintesse shares a border with Novaria. They are the two "modern" (but not, of course, modernist) provinces. The archetypal inhabitant of Vintesse is the "Pippie"—a Romantian girl who enjoys jazz, cocktails and "jinks". The Pippie is rather different from the "flapper" of the historical 1920s (she is at once more fantastical and has less of a tendency toward immorality) but she is, in a way, the Romantian equivalent.

Novaria is "the 2020s and 2030s"—the Romantic future as depicted in the stories of Miss Priscilla Langridge, in the news broadcasts of the Imperial Home Service and in other Romantic places. It is a future in which the best things of earlier eras—innocence, elegance, grace and charm—have returned to the world. Novaria is closely linked to Trent and Vintesse, because the music and films of the 1920s and '30s "stand in" for those of the 2020s and '30s (the actual music of the 2020s and 2030s being a little difficult to come by). Many Romantians regard the true Romantian year as being the current year plus 30, so one might say that, in a certain sense Novaria is even more central to Romantia than Trintitia, although the two are often so closely mingled as to be indistinguishable.

These three provinces, Trintitia, Novaria and Vintesse are the "home provinces" of Romantia. These are where the life of the country is centred, and the capital city, Rom-

antiana, is sited on the intersection of the three.

THE BORDER-LANDS

The two other provinces which lie next to Trintitia are Quirinelle and Kadoria, the "50s" and "40s". The line between these and Trent is unbroken, shewing that they do not have quite the close relation to it as have Vintesse and Novaria. Some Romantians regard them as being almost "out of bounds"—we know several girls who will not have a book printed after 1939 on their shelves; and very few people will seriously claim that the music of the '40s and '50s (especially the latter) is as pure as that of the '20s and '30s. The music of the '50s especially falls largely into the area that Romantics call "camp"—but Romantian camp is really too big a subject to go into here!

Some Romantians regard Quirinelle and Kadoria almost as "buffer provinces" between Romantia proper and Babylon—but one will find many Quirinelle and Kadorian things and people in Romantiana itself (yes, grammarians among you will be interested to note that Quirinelle is an adjective as well as a noun).

Both Quirinelle and Kadoria tend to shade off into rather dark areas—the '50s approach the dreadful 1960s, the '40s were half-filled with the dreadfulness and propaganda of war. Of course, these things do not belong to Quirinelle and Kadoria themselves, for they are not the historical '50s and '40s, only magical crystallisations of what is good in their style. Nonetheless there are grey areas—certain films, certain songs, certain things which are partly Quirinelle or Kadorian, partly far too close to Babylon. The province which these things occupy is called Quarantine—from *Quarante* meaning forty (although it includes both '40s and '50s elements), and also indicating a place set apart from Romantia to prevent contagion of psychic poisons. Quarantine lies outside the psychic fortifications of Romantia, though occasional excursions are made there. Quarantine can also be used as an adjective.

Just as Vintesse, "the 20s" is newer than Trent, so Kadoria and Quirinelle are older. They are in many ways very "grown-up" provinces. The smart, "sensible" tailoring of the '40s, the rich vein of sentiment typified by Kadorian films such as *Brief Encounter* and the voice of Miss Vera Lynne (which has been called the voice of Kadoria), the wholesome, almost motherly, appeal of Miss Doris Day, and many songs and children's books and pictures of the '50s give some aspects of the two border provinces a particularly homely and nourishing appeal—as if all that Babylon was about to destroy gathered itself together for a final, gentle re-affirmation just before the barbarian hordes of the 1960s descended to lay

waste every vestige of innocence and kindness. The border provinces have gathered them up and kept them for us. There is much in Quirinelle and Kadoria that is good for children and for the home.

On the other hand, there is much in Quirinelle that is young and silly and madcap, which is perhaps why Quirinelle shares a border with Vintesse, though Quirinelle never quite counts as "modern" in the way that Vintesse and Novaria do.

Quirinelle is the gleaner, the gatherer of remnants that should be in Romantia and otherwise might not be. Miss Julie Andrews in *Mary Poppins*—a production of the 1960s—creeps into Quirinelle to be saved. Clearly the complete severance of the 1960s did not happen all on one day, and there are a number of the things from that decade—especially from its earlier years—which are still healthy. Yet unlike even the 1950s, the '60s never produced any new sensibility that was healthy. Wherever the 1960s are not diseased it is because they have stayed in the 1950s, and these things belong, of course, in Quirinelle. But the "gleaning" nature of Quirinelle goes further than this. Some say that certain computer games are played there—after all, if the Fall of the 1960s had not taken place there would be computer games, charming, innocent ones, and some Babylonian computer games (unlike Babylonian television programmes) are innocent—simply because they are not yet technically advanced enough to be filled with really corrupting images. It is Quirinelle rather than Novaria which gathers up these accidents of Babylonian decency into the curious Disney-like of the Romantian '50s.

ARCADIA: THE GREAT INNER LAND

These five provinces: Trintitia, Vintesse, Novaria, Quirinelle and Kadoria are called the "new" or "modern" provinces. Arcadia is the ancient or inner province. It is called "inner" because it lies furthest from the border and also because it stretches on inland into a variety of times and places. It is not as clearly defined as Trent or Quirinelle—no one can really say where it ends, which is why it has no boundary on the Eastern side. The adventurer who would explore new lands and find things and people none have seen before will put on his travelling-cloak and journey east into the mysterious depths of Arcadia.

Arcadia is usually thought of as the Victorian and Edwardian periods. Not, of course the actual historical ones, but a Romantian quintessence of the style of those periods. From the faery delicacy of the crinoline to the authoritative crispness of the '90s and Edwardian styles, sometimes in exact "period" forms,

sometimes in fantasy-reworkings—this is the area that we normally call Arcadia: but beyond this, Arcadia stretches on into the world of fairy-tale and magical history. Who can say all that lies in Further-Arcadia? Castles and elf-lands? Dragons and winged horses? A Romantian "Middle Ages"? Hither Arcadia we know. Victorians and Edwardians visit our houses and our libraries and even our cinemas. Further Arcadia stretches away into *terra incognita*, though most of us will see some part of it as our personal Romantian adventure unfolds.

There is a sense in which Arcadia represents a realler world than that of the new provinces—not realler in the Babylonian sense of the term, which equates reality with the products of political power, money and mass-media propaganda—but realler in the sense of being more directly connected with the fundamentals of our nature: the myths and images that lie at the root of our being. Arcadians may seem more "grown up" than the Pippies of Vintesse or even the up-to-date ladies of Trintitia. Of course, "grown up" is not a term that Romantians necessarily regard as a compliment: but Arcadia is grown up in the right sense—not with the drab, cynical "realism" of the late 20th century but with the true depth and maturity of traditional wisdom.

Arcadia is much larger than the five more "modern" provinces. Indeed, it is more like several provinces in one. The "early-to-mid Victorian" world, poised, delicate, almost fairy-tale in its dainty feminine grace, is very different from the tailored precision, and subtle aestheticism of the "90s" or the dashing gaiety of the "Edwardian" realm. In some ways, Arcadia may seem far from the Pippie-world of Vintesse, but there are many connexions between them. Film-lovers often notice that the silent films of the 1920s are much more Arcadian than the talkies of the '30s. Their dark-eyed drama connects them with an older stagecraft and with a more mythic and archetypal style of acting. These 1920s popular entertainments are in many ways more Archetypal and less "modern" than the plays of Oscar Wilde from the end of the preceding century. In such things we see a reflection of the "deeper" side of Arcadia in the sensibility of Vintesse, and on the other hand we may see in the jaunty, debonair sensibility of the 90s and the Edwardian territory a close kinship to Vintesse—the word "spiffing", for example, which many people think of as Wodehousian is actually a '90s-ism. It is hardly surprising then that Arcadia has a long border with Vintesse.

Arcadia's other border may seem even more surprising, for it is with Novaria, "the 2020s and '30s". But in a way the link is even more



QUIRINELLE—WHERE EVEN THE MOST DEPLORABLY CASUAL DRESS HAS HEALTH & CHARM

profound. The refined aestheticism of the '90s—the deep concern with subtle nuances of beauty and of feeling—is very closely connected with the New Sensibility of Novaria. The re-awakening of tradition in the Romantian 21st century (and, we dare to predict, in the historical 21st century too) connects Novaria in a special way to Arcadia.

Arcadia, as we have seen, has a somewhat ambiguous character which is expressed in the name itself. In one sense "Arcadia" refers to the elegant, carefree, aristocratic world of the period before the First Modernist War (an atmosphere which was captured delightfully in the 1920s musical *The Arcadians*). On the other hand, Arcadia is the name of an ancient rural upland state near Athens whose inhabitants maintained a close attachment to the most ancient traditions and were more directly connected to the Primordial Tradition itself than most of the surrounding "civilised world". Arcadia was often opposed to Athens, which may be called the birthplace of Western modernism, and while Arcadia preserved profound traditions, and essential truths, Athens dabbled in republicanism, democracy and early forms of rationalism and proto-materialism. Arcadia sent a contingent to Troy in an attempt to check Athenian aggression there, and some say that Troy itself was founded by settlers from Arcadia.

The profound significance of the Arcadian tradition, including its connexion with the

Arthurian cycle and the Grail romance would take us too far afield from our present study, but it must suffice to say that Arcadia represents a connexion with the deepest and most fundamental tradition. We should also add that for people cast adrift in the late 20th century, an attempt to understand these deeper traditions which was not preceded and accompanied by an understanding of and re-integration with the simple human normality represented by the other provinces would be at best a lost effort and more probably a perversion of the sort represented by the so-called "New Age movement". The late 20th century has been stripped of so much of what might be called the bare essentials of decent human existence that these must be recovered before one may progress either safely or happily to deeper things.

THE FORTIFIED BORDERS

The fortified borders of Romantia are, like Romantia as a whole, a psychic reality. They are our most potent protection against the psychic invasion of Babylon and the Front Line in the Great Babylonian War, of which we must speak at greater length on another occasion.

Babylon is an aggressive psychic force which uses every means to invade and lay waste the hearts, minds and lives of the whole world. No individual alive today is "neutral territory" in this war. Most people are just passive populations who are being overrun by

the enemy. A few are resisting in some measure. Many are acting as militant agents of the enemy—politicians, schoolteachers, clergymen, broadcasters, advertisers and countless others; but only a handful of people alive today are conscious of what they are doing. Only a minute number are clearly aware that such a war is being fought. In the Babylonian camp, only the chief manipulators know what they are doing. Below that level “every brainwasher is also a brainwashee”, for modernism is like vampirism: the victim, once bitten, becomes an active vampire. In the anti-Babylonian camp only a small intellectual élite have any idea of what is happening. Not all of these people are Romantians, but Romantia is one of the very few bodies which is opposing the psychic warfare of the Octopus with direct measures of psychic self-defence and psychic counter-attack. The battle takes place on many fronts—from routing enemy forces upon the battlegrounds of one's own life and psyche (casting out television, rejecting enemy jargon, Romanticising one's life et cetera) to waging symbolic warfare with the guardians of the borderlands, be they knights or archers of Further Arcadia or the gleaming-silver Art-Neo aeroplanes of Novaria or the Amazon war-maidens of the feminine Romantia. As we have said, here is not the place to discuss the question of psychic battle, so we shall merely say that when you have joined your heart to Romantia you are part of the holy crusade against the forces of darkness, and the protection of the castellated battlements of the Great Wall, and the Legions of Light will make you far less vulnerable to the perpetual psychic assault which Babylon is carrying out against every man, woman and child alive in the late 20th century.

ROMANTIA: A PEACEFUL WHOLE

Yet Romantia does not have the air of a nation at war. So effective are the psychic fortifications, so brave and powerful the Legions which defend the borderlands, that Romantia proper is scarcely affected by the war and scarcely aware of Babylon. It is a peaceful land in which life goes on as it should go on: innocently, elegantly, charmingly. In fact, in this fundamental sense, it is the only peaceful land in the world: and every household which is spiritually affiliated to Romantia partakes of the peace and happiness of Romantia.

We have written at some length about Romantia and its provinces, and yet we have barely scratched the surface. We have not mentioned the capital cities of each province (Romantiana does not belong to any one province) or the cities which lie on the various borders and intersections between two or three provinces,

each with its own special character founded upon the subtle links between the inner essences of the neighbouring provinces, upon which we have been able to touch but lightly in this essay. Nor, according to the very nature of such things, have we mentioned various secret places and aspects of Romantia which can only be discovered when one has progressed more deeply into one's Romantian journey.

Nonetheless, even in reading this much, you have already worked a piece of subtle magic. You have laid the groundwork for understanding and actualising Romantia in your heart. The very pattern of this map, which has entered your mind, will allow you to assimilate those things which are real and true in the “past” into a living present which exists for you and for all Romantia. You have moved one step nearer to having a true Romantian home.

We welcome you.

WHOLENESS

The simple secret of Romantic living



FOR Romantians, living is a magical process. The clothes we wear, the rooms we live in, the things we use, the words we speak, all combine to weave a magical spell about our lives: but what is the secret of this spell? What is the key that transforms everything into a perfect whole instead of a hodge-podge of bits and pieces?

This article reveals the secret.

Being a Romantian, one is always trying to achieve the perfect “look” for oneself and for one's home. The perfect “look” is different for each of us, and for each of us there may be several of them, but we all know what it is when we see it: the “look” that is utterly real; that could not, by any stretch of the imagination, be a part of the late 20th century. It may not be authentically 1930s or authentically anything else (or it may), but it is definitely not Babylonian. No native can ever achieve it. They always give themselves away. Every established Romantian acquires it. New Romantians often feel a little nonplussed as to how they can get it.

Is there a secret? Is there some magic formula which will suddenly transform yourself and the things around you, like the Velveteen Rabbit, from imitation to real? The answer, you will be pleased to learn, is Yes. There is a secret. There is a magic formula. It is called *Wholeness*. To explain it, let me tell you a little story: I was recently invited to tea with a

fairly new Romantian. She had only been in the Empire for about eight months, but she had been working hard and her single rented room was, in its own way, perfect. She is a girl of quite limited means and she had certainly not been able to spend a great deal on it, yet, as I say, the room was a perfect creation.

With me at that delightful tea was an even newer Romantian: one who had only just begun to enter the life of the Empire. Like every one at that stage, she was thinking carefully about her own home and how she was to make it truly Romantian in her own way. As we were driving away she turned to me with interest and something like a little consternation.

“What a delightful room,” she said.

“Indeed,” I replied.

“But I cannot help wondering *how it is done*.

I mean, most of the things in it are quite ordinary. There is nothing in the room that one might not have found in the house of a native who “collects old things”—probably such a collector would have rather finer things but his house would be unmistakably that of a native, while hers was quite evidently not a part of the late 20th century. Only the most insensitive person alive could fail to know that he had stepped wholly and completely into another world. How has she done it? Is it magic?”

Well, of course, there is a certain magic in Romantia: I should be the last to make light of it. Nonetheless, the sense of completeness in that room, its Romantic perfection, its truth, its realness, can be explained without recourse to the magical dimension. It can be explained by a single word: *Wholeness*. Wholeness is the key to doing things in a properly Romantian way, whether it be dressing, speaking or furnishing a room. Wholeness is the great difference between the way a Romantian does things and the way a native does the same things. A Romantian and a native may wear the same hat, have the same clock on the mantel, adopt the same verbal affectation, but when the Romantian does it it is real and true; when the native does it, it is just another scrap in the patchwork of Babylonian chaos.

What is the difference? Let us take our friend's room. A native might have had the same pictures (some rather charming Edwardian ones and a few 1920s film stars); he might have had the same tea-trolley (a rather ordinary 1930s suburban one); he might have had the same books, the same clock, the same rather worn but charming second-hand carpet, even the same wind-up gramophone. He might have had any two or three of these things, but the effect would still have been entirely different. The difference would be obvious to any one the minute he stepped into the room, though perhaps not many people could say why.

The most striking thing about our friend's room is a thing few people would think of looking for, though every one is unconsciously struck by it. The most important thing in the room is *what is not there*. I am not referring to any one thing that is not there, such as a television machine, but to *all* the things that are not there. The native, it is true, might have had any—and even all—of the things my friend has, but he would have had other things as well, things that shed a false light upon the real things and shewed them up as mere pieces of Babylonian dilettantism. In my friend's room there was *not* one thing which spoke of the late 20th century. Well, that is not quite true—the room is a rented room and the furniture was not chosen by her and several items of furniture are judiciously covered with decorative drapes: but everything that is allowed to meet the eye is real. The books are all from the 1930s or better, not a single Babylonian volume mars the effect. The gramophone and records are clearly not a native whim-wham: they are her music that she listens to all the time, sometimes swapping records with her friends (myself included). They are not “collectors' items” or “conversation pieces” but objects of everyday use: friends and companions.

This is what we mean by Wholeness. Her room is *wholly* real. The real things are not part of something else, they are the whole. This is what makes the room a haven; a place of psychic health: whereas a dilettante, pseudo-traditional room, is, if anything even healthier than an unthinking, wholly-modernist room.

It is a thousand times better to have a room furnished and equipped from jumble-sales with not a jarring note or an unhealthy object than to have a room adorned with rich and rare treasures from Sotheby's which includes late-20th-century artefacts which make a modernist mockery of them.

The same doctrine of Wholeness applies in every area of life. It is far better to wear the simplest of clothes with nothing out of place than to wear the most exquisite garments topped off with a padded overcoat with zippers or poppers. It is better to wear the plainest of jumpers and skirts with gloves and a simple beret than the most wonderful 1930s frock with no hat and gym-shoes. The Babylonian garment destroys the effect of everything else, however splendid it may be in itself. On the other hand, it is Wholeness that always impresses. I have known girls who wore native artificial dresses (bought at second hand) with artificial gloves and a cheap straw hat, who, wherever they went, received comments on their “period clothes” and indications that they were considered to be rich. Probably their

clothes cost far less than the modernist clown-suits of the people who admired them. In some cases they were not wearing a single item that was actually "period" or even imitation—"period", nor a single thing that was of any monetary value. How did they create an impression so greatly at odds with what they were actually wearing? Wholeness is the answer. While nothing they wore was "period" or expensive, not a single thing was out of place. They wore both hats and gloves which so few Babylonians do. They wore respectable shoes, proper stockings, dresses and coats of a traditional style and design. Because *everything fitted together to form a harmonious whole*, the make-shift nature of each of the parts of that whole went entirely unnoticed. It always happens when one practices Wholeness. However shoe-string one's effects may be, they always create a charming and sumptuous effect, and if one can afford to have really good elements, then the effect is truly breathtaking.

In speech, the same rule applies. It is better to have a simple, good traditional vocabulary than to have the most glorious phrases and affectations mixed in with lumps of unnoticed Babylonian jargon such as "ongoing", "life style", "recycle" or "into" (in the sense of "interested in" or "involved in"). One phrase of this type destroys the whole effect and makes one's charming speech look like a vulgar Babylonian sham.

Please do not think that we are arguing against flamboyant dress, exquisite rooms or extravagant speech. Such things are the flower of Romantia, although they are not necessarily for all of us. What we are saying is that whatever you do, it must be done *wholly*. It is the things you do *not* have, the things you *never* wear, the things you *never* say that make the greatest impression, because it is they that make the other things—the things you *do* have, say and wear—real and true, whether they be great or small, extravagant or homely.

A Romantian is not necessarily (though he may well be) some one who wears the most exquisite clothes. He is necessarily some one who would not be seen dead in training shoes or a zipped or popped jacket. She is not necessarily (though she often is) some one who wears the most beautiful 1930s fashions, but she is necessarily some one who would die rather than be seen in a padded jacket or jeans. Caught in a storm and given a choice between a cheap 1950s see-through plastic mac and an expensive 1990s green barbour as worn by the "best" Babylonians, a Romantiquette will take the plastic mac for her first choice and getting drenched for her second.

Wholeness means that things which belong to the style of the late 20th century simply do not

exist in our world. They are the things which make us blush and our throats go dry with embarrassment. If for some reason we have to have them, they are covered, hidden away. They are no part of our "official" life. We do not mean dreadful clothes, of course—there is no excuse for having those—but, for example, a Romantic is embarrassed by having a television machine even when it is only used for watching real films. It is covered and kept well out of sight, as it should be, for design is propaganda, and this is a hateful piece of Babylonian propaganda. Similarly, if one must have late-20th-century books for any reason one keeps them hidden away and not on the bookshelf. A typical Babylonian reaction is to call this "hypocrisy" (very few Babylonians appear to know what the word actually means); but it is simply *tašte*. Even Babylonians, we believe, still have a few physical functions which are regarded as improper to perform in public or to refer to unnecessarily. Once one regains a normal taste, one finds such things as late-20th-century books or television sets almost as embarrassing and distasteful as these functions. They may have their (very limited) uses, but no decent person would let them be seen in all their crudity and ugliness.

Once one has begun to develop this sensitivity in dress, in room-decoration, in speech and in every other aspect of life, Wholeness will follow naturally and everything you do will begin to look *right*.

Until it starts to become natural, is there an easy way to develop Wholeness? Yes, there is. Do what you are doing already—look for the best things you can find for your home and your wardrobe—but to add the magic ingredient of Wholeness, simply do this. Look at your room, or look in the looking-glass before you go out. Look carefully at everything and see if there is anything there that should not be there, and if there is, get rid of it. It is really as simple as that. Remember, it is the things that are *not* there that make the difference.

JUDY or the Ladyton Charivari

MISS Print, Miss Punctuation and Miss Under-Standing have been involved in the printing business ever since it was started by Mr. Wm. Coxtan. They are much-travelled ladies who seem to get about to every province of the Empire lending their charm to books, newspapers, magazines, catalogues, even signs in shop windows. Here are a few of their recent efforts kindly sent to us by readers in Trent, Kadoria and Quirinelle.

The first piece seems perhaps a little—well—suggestive although it is by a much—

»»» TO »»»

ANGELS IN BABYLON

A DELIGHTFUL NOVEL OF LIFE IN ROMANTIA

HETTIE had prepared a little speech for the headmistress. She intended to tell her how, although she had no ill feelings toward her or any of her staff or pupils, although she realised that they were perfectly good people who took on the outward forms they did merely because they were fashioned by the dreadful times they lived in, nonetheless,

◀ respected authoress. Suggestive of *what*, though, we are not quite sure:

"She grew redder and her cheeks seemed to swell under her tight black blouse."

from *Gypsy, Gypsy* by Miss Rumer Godden

Well, they say truth is stranger than fiction, but the strangest things do happen in fiction, do they not?

"He went across to the fireplace and stood with his back to its warmth, staring into the fire with unseeing eyes."

Short Story

It can be done, of course, but it is not very comfortable. Even less comfortable is the way some people occupy their spare time, though even here the quest for efficiency continues:

"Save time and cut fingers with a parsley mincer."

This Week

Let us try something more elevating. Take this tale of hard work and well-merited success reviewed by a colonial newspaper:

"This is the story of an advertising genius who works his way up from the position of errand boy to that of a greatly advertised food."

Calgary Albertan

I say, perhaps we have not raised the tone after all. From applying the wonders of modern science to the old-fashioned hobby of self-laceration, we have moved to the application of the wonders of modern publicity to the old-fashioned hobby of cannibalism. *Plus ça change* and all that sort of rot, what? But it seems to be becoming quite widespread.

Pickled Pork or Boiled Rabbi . . . 2s. 3d.
Café Menu

There is much more that one could add, but Miss Judy finds herself cramped into the corners of this publication, fitted in between the more important things of life such as lip-rouge and photoplays. So, until next time, that's all, yorks.

[ERRATUM: "That's all, yorks" was a misprint. It should, of course, have read "That's all, yokels"]

those outward forms and all the actions associated with them had caused her the most intense unhappiness for the entire period of her school career. She felt she must say it in order to unburden herself, and also in case it might make the Head understand and perhaps find some way to ameliorate the lot of some other child such as herself who might come under the care of the school.

Once in the office she found she could say nothing of what she had intended. The headmistress smiled benignly, with her complacent, poisoned, well-intentioned face and Hettie was seized up with moral cowardice. She hated herself. Her hands felt cold and trembly, but she said nothing more than the polite commonplaces that were expected of her.

"I suppose you have read Mr. P——'s book," said the headmistress.

"No," said Hettie. It was not entirely true. She had dipped into it, but she could not bring herself to admit it. Mr. P—— was the head of the English department and had gained some small celebrity for his "controversial" book on educational theory. He was a smug, stupid, ultra-modernist "intellectual", and like all "controversial" books which were published in the late 20th century, his book was a dreary re-hash of the standard anarchistic orthodoxies of the time with a few personal eccentricities thrown in to make it marginally different from the countless dozens of other such books—eccentricities which, if such a thing were possible, were even more valueless than the main ballast of standard modernist platitude.

"You will have to read it, you know," said the Headmistress. "Whenever you tell any one that you attended this school, they will immediately ask you about Mr. P——."

Suddenly Hettie erupted. The headmistress had provided the trigger she needed. Her planned speech was forgotten, but fresh words flooded to her tongue in an unstoppable flow: "I hope that I shall move from now on in circles that have no interest in such matters: but whether I do or not, I can assure you that I shall never, under any circumstances, admit to having attended this school or even to having set foot inside it. My sojourn here has been an episode of my history which has taken place against my will, and which I now propose to blot out entirely. You expressed a curiosity, in your end-of-term speech to know what would be the first act of school-leavers on entering what you so fawningly call 'the real world'. I do not propose to enter that world which I

»»» II »»»

know to be no better than the world of this school—and I can think of no greater condemnation than that—but my first act upon leaving school will be this: I shall sit down with pen and paper and re-write my life. I shall write the story of my first eighteen years, not as it has been twisted and distorted by the hateful world in which they were spent, but as they *should* have been and as, from that point forward they *shall* have been. Perhaps I shall take an incident or two from my 'real' life and re-cast it in a form suitable for human consumption, but frankly there is almost nothing in my past that is worthy of such redemption. I shall leave this room regretting the utter waste and mental anguish of my years at this school; but in a fortnight from today I shall no longer regret them, for they will no longer have been."

The headmistress had looked somewhat shocked. Not very shocked—her liberal complacency was too enormous for that—but somewhat shocked and a little hurt and utterly, utterly uncomprehending.

It did not matter. The speech was not really intended for the Head—such people can never understand anything that does not come to them down the pyramid of mind-control. It was meant for herself. Not that the things she had said were exactly new to her, but they put into a more definite form ideas she had been toying with for a long time. Yes: she had told herself what to do. She must write. Write her new autobiography. Re-write her past and write everything that had been forced upon her up to now out of being. As she passed through the school gates for the last time she was racked by a physical shudder, like that of an animal shaking some unclean substance off its pelt.

But of course, the nightmare was not over. A cyclist passed, wearing a ludicrous yellow safety-helmet and a fluorescent plastic jacket and the smug face of a man who, having lost every ounce of real human dignity (else how could he conceive of wearing such things?), puffs himself up in his conformity to the fads offered him by one or another tentacle of the Octopus. In his abject conformity to something big and rich and ubiquitous lies all that remains of pride. If there had been only one of him it had not mattered, but the world was full of them, watching their mind-control boxes and calling their shillings "five-pee". Some, like this one, were more ridiculous than others, but all were absurd, deracinated ghosts of humanity.

Where could one go? What could one do? What sort of a life was there? One could re-write the past, but what was one to do about the present? Wait until it had gone and then re-write it? Wait until one's whole life was

gone? Of course one could do what the clown on the bicycle had done, and the Headmistress and the Queen and every one else one had ever seen or heard of. One could give in, become part of the system. Be brainwashed. "Just lie down under it. You won't feel a thing, and after that it will not trouble you." But of course it would trouble her. It probably troubled most of them, although they did not dare to think about it too much—the fool on the bicycle probably did not *really* like being such an idiot, not in his heart of hearts. If he had been born in another time he would have been a real person. The Queen probably rather hated it all quite consciously, though she would feel guilty if she said so. Even the headmistress—well, perhaps not her. But even she, if she had been born in a different time would have been sycophantically serving something quite different. She might have been an Abbess or a terribly modest Victorian. She might have been a rather nice person. Even Mr. P—; well, he would have been a puffed-up toad in any age, but at least he would have been a *real* puffed-up toad and not a plastic one.

But what was the good of thinking about giving in? She could not if she would, nor would not if she could. She knew that. She had been offered a place at a good University. She had no desire to take it up, knowing what Universities had become—even good ones—but unpleasant as it seemed, it seemed less unpleasant than all the alternatives. So, she would go. And in the meantime, over the summer, she would re-write her life.

It seemed in a way a hopeless gesture. She would do as she had said. She would re-make her history and re-make it utterly. She would never again give recognisance to the eighteen lost years that lay behind her. But who, among the walking dead of Babylon would notice or would care?

Nonetheless she would re-write her life. She had said she would do so and she would. She would wipe out those eighteen years even if nothing else came of it. She owed them extinction.

My name is Annalise Nightwind. I was born some eighteen years ago in the tiny principality of Mooncastle. A fine land it was, whose silver towers gleamed against the white clouds of summer. I was reared by a dark-eyed white-skinned nurse from the Lunar mountains, who spoke only the lunar tongue; reared in luxury but in great strictness, for life was as a subtle dance in which every action must be performed according to pattern and with elegance and grace. . .

It is curious how quickly things can change. Whenever Annalise (for so we must henceforth call her) looked back upon this opening

passage of her narrative, she could not but remember the heart with which she wrote it, near breaking under the relentless weight of unrelieved despair; nor could she fail to remember the circumstance which changed everything so suddenly—that event so commonplace and yet so extraordinary, so matter-of-fact and yet so close to miracle, which catapulted her almost without transition from that hopeless, desperate world into the world in which she now lived and moved and had her being. Did the writing of this narrative have some magical effect which attracted a new current into her life? Did the very act of writing these words open a new chapter in her existence? Annalise always believed it did, and, as she moved increasingly from a mundane world into a magical one, this belief seemed to her increasingly probable, and the vulgar notion of "coincidence" not so much far-fetched as meaningless.

But we anticipate. What was this fateful event? It was nothing more remarkable than a familiar slide-and-ruddle at the front door indicating that some circular or such thing had been delivered. Annalise walked wearily to the doormat. Nothing that came could hold the smallest interest for her or be anything but an unpleasant alien intrusion. She picked it up in order to burn it and noticed the heading. One could not help noticing the heading. It was in a large, plain sans-serif type which gave it something of a 1930s appearance and it said.

THIS IS A HANDBILL FROM ANOTHER WORLD

Annalise was not unduly impressed. Yet another sales-gimmick from the neurotic circus of Babylon. And yet, it did not look quite like it. Not slick enough for one thing. Too plain and black-and-white and old-fashioned. She could not resist reading it. The actual words she can never quite remember, though the heading has always stuck in her mind; but they might have been addressed directly to her. "Are you tired of the modern world," they asked, "Are you looking for a world of elegance and charm?" And so it continued, describing her feelings exactly. She opened the door to see if she could see who had delivered it. Some way down the street were two elegantly dressed girls popping handbills through doors. She wanted to call out to them or run down and talk to them, but her nerve failed her. She went back inside the house, cursing herself for a coward. She rang the telephone number given on the handbill but there was no reply. She returned to her narrative, forcing herself to concentrate; but it was very difficult. What had she found? What had found her?

Actually the narrative came more easily than

ever. Words flowed in a scarcely-bidden torrent. She was caught up in a stream of romantic life. What really troubled her was the crushing disappointment which she felt half-certain must follow. These people would not be *real*; they would just be some new variant of the hysteria of the late 20th century. Or *would* they? Of course they would. One was old enough to have learnt that much—that nothing decent can flourish in this desert of the soul.

At four o'clock she rang again. Still no answer. At half-past four and at five. It was at about twenty past five that the ringing was stopped by an answer. Annalise was almost too taken aback to know what to say.

"Oh, I have just received your handbill. I wonder if you could tell me a little more."

"Certainly," said the pleasant female voice with careful vowels and a manner that was utterly un-Babylonian. "You must understand that you are not dialling anywhere in the late 20th century. This is Romantia. It is a sovereign nation with its own laws and its own customs. . ."

Every word she uttered made it clear that Romantia was the place Annalise had been looking for all her life—at least since her exile from Mooncastle—or rather, the place she had not been looking for, because it had not seemed possible that it might exist. And yet, why not? There must still be some sane people in the world, and among those sane people a tiny minority who have the courage and the imagination to refuse to accept, like docile sheep, the dark, chaotic dispensation thrust upon them but to build a world of their own. Why not? It should have been done, and it *had* been done.

"... Is that the sort of thing you have been looking for?"

"Oh, absolutely. If it is as real as you say, it is the answer to a prayer."

"Pippy-ho—I mean, jolly good. We must meet you, then. When would be convenient?"

"Would tonight be possible?"

"That's the spirit. How about half past eight? I shall give you directions."

Annalise put down the receiver and at the other end of the line a heavy bakelite receiver was replaced by the delicately-manicured hand of Miss Camilla Trent.

"What is she like, Camembert?" asked her sister "Tinkerbell" Trent.

"Oh, one really can't tell at this stage, Tinkles" said Miss Trent.

"You're being cautious. I think she's sound."

"You have not even spoken to her, silly."

"No, but I know you. You've got 'the look'. You've found a realiee."

"Well, she sounded sound, and she wanted to come straight away, which is a good sign."

"Did you tell her to come properly dressed?"

We don't want her flipping up in jeans or some floppy cotton skirt."

"I dropped a hint, but it seemed wrong to say too much. I don't think she sounds as if she would come badly dressed."

"Well, there you are. I knew you thought she was sound."

"I did not say that. We shall see."

The question of Annalise's dress was also occupying Annalise. What would be best? The girls she had seen were very *chic*. Annalise had very little of a wardrobe. She never went out and had not thought much about clothes. Of course she had never worn a jean or anything of that sort, but what was the point of dressing delightfully when there was no one to see you except a few million zombies?

She wondered whether to wear her school uniform. She was the only girl in the school who had an immaculate school uniform. It used to drive both the girls and the mistresses mad to see her dressed so strictly according to the regulations when no one else did. That was why she did it. Still, school uniform seemed a bit eccentric. Actually it would have gone down very well, but she would not risk it yet.

Eventually she settled for a nice black velvet skirt with matching coat, white lacy blouse, black tights (she would soon learn the error of her ways in that matter) and black "going-out" shoes. Luckily she had white gloves because they were still part of the school uniform, although she was the only girl who wore them. Or perhaps they had been abolished a few years ago. One really took no notice. The hat was the main problem. Obviously one could not go without a hat, but she really never went anywhere, so all she had was her school beret, another item which had been a daily scandal to the sixth form. It would have to do, and it seemed symbolic that on the day that her school career had been officially "unhappened", she should have cause to remove the school badge from her beret.

Annalise's first taste of Romantia was—well, at every turn it was unlike anything she had imagined. The house she was directed to was a tall, terraced one in a very Victorian street in a part of town which, while not dreadful was considerably less nice than she had been accustomed to seeing in her rather limited experience. It had a certain dingy atmosphere, a certain wistful charm: indeed, if it had not existed in the later 20th century, spotted with nasty-looking cars and nasty-looking people, that charm might have been quite marked. As it was—well, all Babylonian streets are Babylonian, from the best to the worst, so it really makes little difference where one is.

There were a number of doorbells, most

with scribbled names on little cards beneath them. One, however had an engraved card:

ROMANTIAN EMPIRE
CITY OF LADYTON
MISS TRENT
MISS TINKERBELL TRENT

Annalise pressed the bell several times before deciding that it was not working. The front door, however, gave to a gentle push, revealing a dingy hallway and an unpleasantly dirty-musty smell. One had to climb a number of stairs to get to the Trent flat. The atmosphere of the house was what one could only call "Studenty". Of course, no decent person refers to an undergraduate as a "Student". That is only one stage less ghastly than calling a school pupil a "Student". Nonetheless, there is a certain type of undergraduate (about nine out of ten in the late 20th century), for whom the term "Studenty" sums up their utter awfulness. Annalise was tempted to turn back there and then: but the voice on the telephone had not been remotely "Studenty" (or "Stcheedentee" to give the term its "Studenty" pronunciation), so she resolved to press on. She had nothing to lose, after all, even if it looked increasingly as if she had nothing to gain either.

She came to the third landing. The Trents she had been told, occupied the third floor. Their stairs were curtained off. Once through the curtain, the atmosphere changed somewhat. Two rather curious plaster half-heads, in three-quarter profile, of elegant 1940s ladies were attached to the walls of the stairway. 1930s dance-band music could be heard from above. She quickly found herself on a tiny landing with a panelled door on each of three sides. The music seemed to be coming from the middle one straight in front, so she knocked on it. It was opened by a girl in spectacles with bobbed hair. She was wearing a double-breasted blouse with a large bow at the left of the throat decorating her shoulder, a pleated, calf-length skirt and dark stockings. She had a mildly scholarly air; but the most striking thing about her was quite indefinable. Somehow she just did not look remotely as if she belonged to the late 20th century. She might be from the 1930s or the 1950s. She might be from the future, but she certainly did not look anything like a girl from the period between 1960 and 2010. Why was that? The clothes? Partly, but none of them were things a Babylonian might not have worn. Was it her manner, her way of speech? Perhaps a combination of all these things. It was really impossible to put one's finger on it, but there it was. She was not one of *them*. Annalise felt, rather

selfconsciously, that despite everything she probably did look rather like one of *them*—not completely, of course, and by no means the worst of them, but she was not, she felt sure, so utterly, indefinably, effortlessly *different* as this girl.

"Miss Nightwind?" said her hostess.

"Yes, and you must be Miss Trent."

"Indeed, do come in."

The room was, like its mistress, utterly outside Babylon. The wind up gramophone, the piles of records, the pictures, the art-deco lamps, the books—not one of them printed after 1960. Nothing in the room was poisoned by the Age of Darkness. It was not an expensively-furnished room (though people often thought it was). Almost everything had been picked up for a few pounds at flea-markets and jumble sales. It was just an ordinary-ish room in Romantia, full of the character of its occupants; but no one entering it could have imagined herself in Babylon. One had crossed a threshold into another world. That was clear.

She had hardly taken a seat before the door opened again and another girl entered. Bobbed hair. Polka-dot dress with knee-length flared skirt. Half a dozen glittering rings, very striking make-up—cupid's-bow lips, dark-shadowed eyes, pencil-arched eyebrows (yes, it was partly the make-up that made them look so different. It was not so eye-catching on the other girl, but the red, carefully-formed lips, the whole sense of having "put a face on" with both feminine gaiety and feminine dignity helped a great deal to make them look utterly unlike the poisoned herd).

"Miss Moonwind," said her hostess, "allow me to introduce my sister Tinkerbell."

"What a ripping name!" said Tinkerbell. "Where did you get it?"

Annalise took a breath. Should she? She must! "I was born in a small principality called Mooncastle. Perhaps you have heard of it. Nightwind is a Mooncastillian name; a very old Mooncastillian name as a matter of fact."

"Mooncastle," mused Miss Tinkerbell. "Forgive me, my memory is appalling. Could you shew me on the map whereabouts it is?" She took out a map of Romantia printed in a small magazine, shewing the provinces. It was utterly delightful. They were fitting her rewritten life immediately into their world.

Annalise studied the map. "I think—I think it must be about here," she said, pointing to a band which crossed the border between Vintesse and Novaria and took in a little of Arcadia.

"It looks a delightful place," said Miss Trent. "Not so very far from here."

"Forgive me, my geography is dreadful," said Annalise. "Where exactly are we now?"

"Oh, you cosmopolitan travellers! We are

here," she said, pointing out Ladyton. "Dear old Ladyton. I have never lived anywhere else—except Romantiana, of course, which is a sort of Siamese-twin-city, although some Ladyton girls never go there. You will not find it as exotic as Mooncastle, I fear, but it is a charming old city."

"Best city in the world," said Miss Tinkerbell. "The girl who is tired of Ladyton is tired of life."

"For in Ladyton there is all that life can afford," said Annalise.

"Absolutely. Capital of civilisation, whatever the Romantianians say. But where have you been flipping? In the Native Quarter?"

"Where is that?"

"I mean, among the Babylonians."

"I am sorry, but who are the Babylonians?"

"I am afraid my sister sometimes has difficulty in speaking any but our city dialect. She asks have you been staying outside Romantia?"

"I am afraid I have."

"Rather froggy, isn't it?" said Miss Tinkerbell.

"Utterly froggy," said Annalise, picking up the terminology gleefully.

"Have you seen the bottom part of this house?" asked Miss Tinkerbell. "Isn't it a hoot? The only reason we don't knock it down is that we're on top of it."

Annalise laughed rather more than the small joke warranted. It was delightful. Delightful to be among people who could laugh with one about all the absurd, hideous things.

"I nearly did knock it down when I saw it," said Annalise. "I am so glad I didn't." The two of them laughed like schoolgirls. Miss Trent was very much the elder sister.

"Would you like a cocktail, Miss Nightwind?" Usually first-timers were offered tea, but this was *real*.

"Oh yes, I should love one. I don't believe I have ever had a cocktail before."

"I suppose one has a sheltered life in these exotic principalities," said Miss Tinkerbell.

"Yes, in a way one does. I mean, one sees quite a lot of dragons and sorceresses and that sort of thing, but not many cocktails or . . ."

"Or Turkish cigarettes in long holders, or the latest dance bands, or Marlene Dietrich."

"Do you have all those things in Romantia?"

"Oh, yes. We are bang-splot up-to-date." Miss Tinkerbell wound the gramophone and put on a red-hot dance-band, "Straight from Vintesse, this record. The latest thing. Here in the capital we get the best from all over the world. Music from Vintesse; films from Trent; motor-cars from Kadoria; circular skirts from Quirinel; fashions from everywhere. I can't imagine any one living anywhere else."

Miss Trent shook the chromium cocktail-shaker vigorously and began to pour its contents into charming, triangular Art-Neo glasses. "The Fountain of Youth," she said.

Annalise found the Fountain of Youth exhilarating. Sweet and strong and carefree. The music was delightful; the conversation was wonderful. For the first time in her life she was among people with whom she felt at one. Behind the bouncy jinkiness of Miss Tinkerbelle and the primness of Miss Trent she sensed a depth of warmth and kindness, and even though she had known them for but the shortest time she felt that she had already won a place in their affections as they both certainly had in hers. In truth, there is a deep bond between those who adhere to the ways of charm and sanity in a world that has abandoned them and who have the courage to act and live by their beliefs—a bond which explains why the land of Romantia is bound together by a love and trust that is hardly known elsewhere. Annalise found herself already entering into this heady current of sympathy and love.

"Was it you I saw delivering the handbill?" asked Annalise.

"I hope not," said Miss Tinkerbelle. "I always try to be invisible when I am delivering handbills. It doesn't seem quite the thing really."

"No," said Annalise. "You don't really seem like handbill-delivering sorts."

"We aren't. Really. It is a question of war-work."

"War-work?"

"Yes. Romantia is at war with Babylon. I do not mean we are at war with the *people* of Babylon, who really cannot help being the poor brainwashed things they are, but with the dark forces that lie behind Babylon. We are at war with the ugliness and nastiness and stupidity that *are* Babylon. The Octopus, we call it. The creature which has its tentacles in every one and everything outside Romantia and poisons them all. The Octopus attacks us by trying to poison us, by devastating all the beauty of the world by—oh, by all the things you know. We attack the Octopus in all sorts of subtle ways, and by building up a world and a sensibility which will eventually overturn him—but also we fight in smaller ways, by rescuing souls who lie in his clutches. After all, his power really lies in how many people he can cozen into playing his game, so we have to take people away from him."

"I suppose that is a bit demoralising as it will never be many people."

"Oh no. You do not understand. Of course it will not be many people. That is not really the point. Most people in any age are sheep.

They will follow whatever dispensation is in power. *They* don't count. They are the goods and chattels that come with the ownership of the means of communication. They would all be Romantics—all the ghastly business executives and the polytechnic lecturers and the anarchists and Conservative M.P.s and Street-corner louts and all the puffed-up little snerps who 'have their own opinions', meaning they have some minor variant on the opinions distributed by one or another tentacle of the Octopus—all of them would all be as much Romantics as they are Babylonians if we were telling them what to think instead of the Octopus. *They* do not count for anything. They are whatever the age tells them to be, which in most ages is a perfectly good thing and in an age like theirs is repulsive—and that is not their fault since they are entirely passive and have no will in the matter. The only people who *count* are people like you: people who are capable of having thoughts that have not been programmed into them. *Passive minds* have no effect on the future. They are just sacks of potatoes humped about by whoever happens to own them. Only *active minds* determine what will be thought and felt in the future. That is our job. To find the *active minds*. It is not quantity that matters. Quantity is just the automatic possession of power, *Quality* is what matters. That is what determines the future.

"So you see, handbill-plipping is quite an important act of war."

"And perhaps more importantly," said Miss Trent, "it is an act of *rescue*. Hundreds of people like yourself are trapped in Babylon, thinking that they are entirely alone, thinking that no one in the whole world is sane except themselves. If we do not find them, or they do not find us, they will spend their whole lives in the most heartbreaking exile: in the Siberia of the soul, surrounded by ugliness and stupidity—and all the time Romantia may be only a street away. Yes, it feels rather silly to go about as if one were touting for custom among all the types, but it is not the types one is worried about; it is the one or two like you—the true souls in exile. It is the terrible waste of life that we must try to stop."

"I say," said Miss Tinkerbelle, "We are getting serious. It must be time for another Fountain of Youth."

"And another record," said Miss Trent. "Would you like to choose one this time, Miss Nightwind?"

Annalise looked through the pile of records. They were heavy and solid and had fascinating labels, but the titles and bands meant little to her. "I am afraid the latest music rarely gets out to Mooncastle," she said. "You will have to guide me."

"You lucky girl," said Miss Tinkerbelle, "what a world of wonderful music awaits you."

"Oh, yes! It feels like a whole adventure in itself. Will you guide me into it?"

"*Pas demi*, my lovely Mooncastle lady. It will be my pleasure—and-a-half. We must begin with the archetype of all popular orchestras, the Savoy Orpheans. Now I wonder if I can find them here—"

Time took wing as the three girls plunged into the wonderful world of the latest popular music. Miss Tinkerbelle played the most delightful selection, telling Annalise about songs, singers and orchestras, the styles of different provinces as the music wove a hundred different spells about them.

Annalise began to worry about outstaying her welcome, even though things were going swimmingly. One did not want to stay half the night and be thought badly of, but she must, before she went, say something. How did one say it?

"I say," she began, a touch awkwardly.

"What is it?" asked Miss Trent kindly.

"Well, I just wanted to say, about Romantia—I don't want to be just a visitor. I want to join you properly. I want to be part of the City."

"It is a serious decision," said Miss Trent. "If you are really One of Us you cannot be One of Them. It is one world or the other."

"You are welcome to go on visiting for a while and make your mind up over time," said Miss Tinkerbelle.

"There is no need for that," said Annalise firmly. "I have never had the smallest allegiance to Babylon. I have always hated it. I am sure there are a few bits of it in me, but I want to get them out as soon as possible. There is no question of making my mind up. I am *not* a Babylonian, I never was. I know there must be war between Romantia and Babylon and I know which side I am on. Romantia now and ever! Romantia to the death! Hail Romantia!"

Was it the cocktails? Was it the music? She had never made speeches like that before—but then she had never had anything to make speeches *about*, and she had lived in a world where dash and eloquence were sneered at rather than loved. Here they were loved. "Hail Romantia!" echoed the sisters and Miss Tinkerbelle threw her arms about Annalise and kissed her. They squeezed each other until they could hardly breathe.

"Welcome home," said Miss Trent. "This calls for another cocktail."

"Of course, you will have to learn a lot of things and make a number of changes."

"Of course I shall. I mean to."

"What do you think you need to learn, little one?"

"I need to learn to dress properly and speak properly and walk properly. I should love to learn how to make myself up to look as real as you do."

"Well, of course every one has her own style, but I am sure we can help you to get started."

"Your clothes are very charming," said Miss Trent.

"Do you think so?"

"Oh, yes, simple but quite Romantic. Rather *fillette*-ish."

"I should like to be a bit more dashing."

"All in good time. Let us start with lip-rouge."

"Yes, and you will have to wear stockings. That is one of the things."

The Trents between them had a daunting array of lipsticks and pencils and fell to experimenting with Annalise rather as if she were a sort of doll, though a very animated one who took a lively part in the proceedings. She ended up with a rather Novarian purply-red cupid's bow. The colour suited her wonderfully and Miss Trent wondered whether this delicate flower was going to turn into an Art-Neo pipsie.

"You must keep your *fillette* side," she said, "however Pipsie you become. One can have more than one *persona*, you know."

"Absolutely," said Miss Tinkerbelle. "Never lose track of that beret. It is too, too charming."

"May I ask a—well, a rather intimate question?" asked Annalise.

"You may ask," said Miss Trent, "but you are not guaranteed an answer."

"Were you—well, were you *always* sisters?"

Miss Trent smiled. "Were you always a Mooncastle lady?"

"Of course," said Annalise firmly.

"And so were we—sisters, I mean."

Annalise left with a new face, a precious packet of real 1950s stockings and an invitation to the cinema tomorrow. The sisters had kissed her before she left as if she had been a member of the family, and indeed, she felt that they *were* her family. Perhaps one day she would acquire a real Romantian family, and perhaps they would be part of it. It was all very magical and mysterious. She passed various types shambling past her along the dreadful Babylonian streets. What did it matter. She was a Romantian. Soon she would take an oath of allegiance and be officially a Romantian subject. What did the dark world matter? She had a city, she had friends, she had a home.

What a lot had happened on that day. How different was life now from what it had been this morning. Then she had been in the depths of misery, in the darkest of exiles. Whatever happened now, nothing could return her to that →

CROSSWORD PUZZLES

WHAT THEY ARE AND HOW TO SOLVE THEM

"A QUITE fairly 'citing life after all," writes the Woman's Chat page of *The Bylander* for December '24, "more especially since you don't know when you're going to be cat-burglared next. Or be asked to solve one of those crossword puzzles that're making life such a miserable burden for us all." *Punch* comments: "The allure of Epstein and Oxford trouserings has been for the few; the Crossword Puzzle has captivated the many."

Crosswords, it seems, are really here to stay—at least if the last year or two are anything to go by. Crosswords are everywhere. We even hear that the Babylonians are attempting them—using their funny pea-monkey in clues, and their dreadful jargon. That sounds a bit unlikely; but certainly crosswords are all over the real world.

They started off in America (the first one appeared in the *New York World* of Sunday 21st December 1913—it was invented and compiled by an Englishman, Mr. Arthur Wynne) and were quite simple affairs—the clues were just straightforward definitions of the words to be filled in. Large prizes were often offered, and they were not as easy to win as you might think because several words might fit the same definition and the crossword was constructed so that it might be completed in a number of different ways, only one of which was deemed "right" (the cynical might even suspect that the decision was sometimes made after the event). Not a terribly satisfying intellectual exercise and unsurprisingly, it died out in America.

However, in England we treated it rather differently. We had a brief flutter with the American-style puzzle, but that tired us even more quickly than it tired the Americans. Then the crossword was married with some of our older forms of word-game—double acrostics and the like—which have long graced the pages of English periodicals, and a terribly clever sort of crossword evolved (no, not out of a monkey-puzzle—nobody believes in that sort of thing any more!) containing puns, ana-

grams, literary and historical allusions and every kind of indirect reference. The English crossword became the quintessential word-puzzle, containing elements of nearly all the others. Since word-squares and acrostics go back at least to the time of Christ, the English crossword is a linear descendant of games which have fascinated the mind of man from time immemorial. No wonder it has become so popular. Quickly it spread from Vintessa to the other provinces, and even filtered back to America in its new form. Today you can even find one in the *Imperial Angel*.

Although crosswords are primarily about words rather than ideas (and a great part of the art of solving them is to understand just how surprisingly much they are about words), nonetheless, the world of the crossword is filled obliquely with concepts, even as a room may be lighted by slanting shafts of sunlight that scarcely penetrate beyond its window-bays. The crossword-world is a curious world of gentle whimsy—that whimsy which has always attracted the English-speaking people, a world of curious poetry and fleeting images that are not what they seem. Also, a crossword emanates from the thought-world in which it is born, so the Romantic crossword is filled with the breath of Trent, Arcadia, Quirinelle and the other provinces, with the fellowship of Romantia, with dance-bands and photoplays, with traditional metaphysics and fox-furs all jumbled together with the amiable, topsy-turvy logic of crossword-land.

But not every one knows how to solve the complex English cryptic crossword. Where crosswords are concerned, people fall into three categories: those who can do them, those who simply do not have the sort of mind for doing them and (we suspect this is the largest category) those who could do them if they knew how to go about it, but don't and therefore can't.

The aim of this essay is to take those of our readers who fall into the third category and guide them quickly and easily into the first.

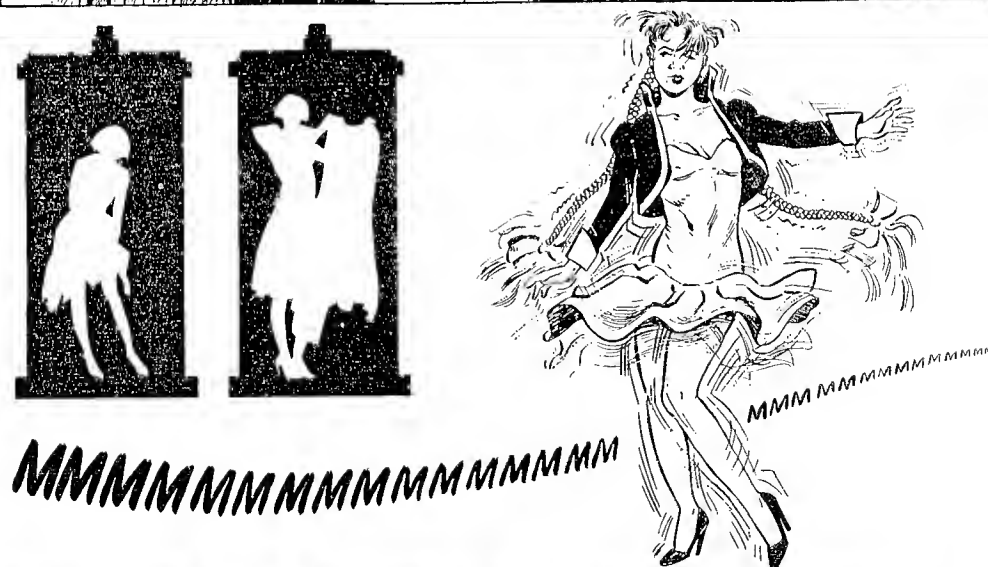
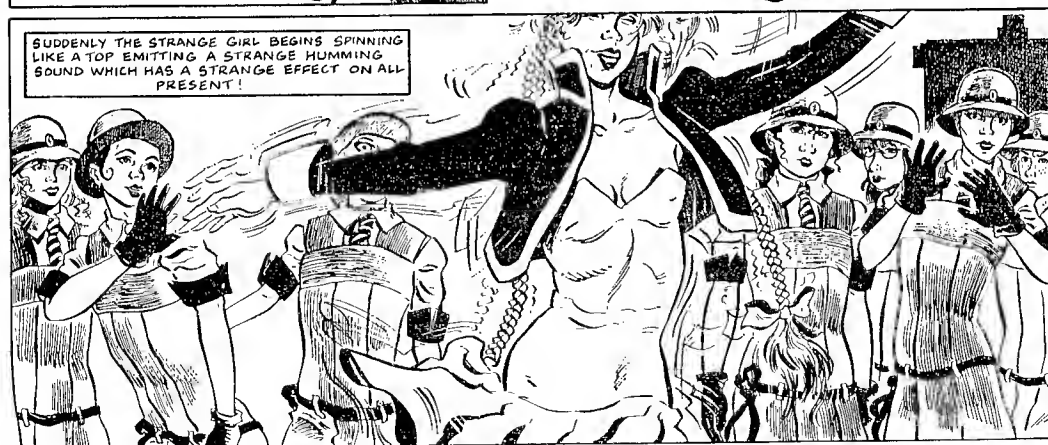
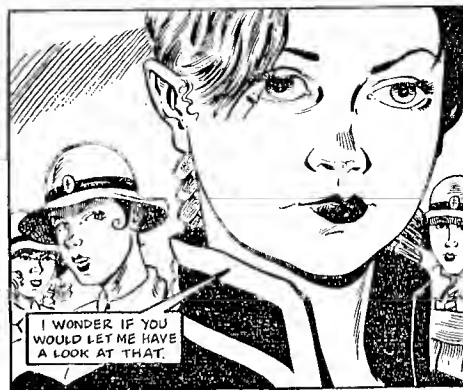
What not every one knows about crosswords is that they have a large number of conventions. They are passed down from father to son and from mother to daughter. If one does not know these conventions, an ordinary crossword clue can look indecipherable. Once one knows them—well, they do not become obvious for that would spoil the fun, and the compilers take great pains to disguise them. Nevertheless, with a grounding in Crossword Conventions one knows where to begin.

happened now, nothing could return her to that exile. She walked on, remembering to keep her back straight and head high. Wherever she went she represented the honour of Romantia.

A popular tune went round in her head: "You may not be an angel . . ." Oh, but they were angels. She was among the angels now.

"I think I shall start a diary," she said to herself, "for this is the first day of my life."







The first thing to know is that most cross-word clues consist of two parts: 1) a straightforward definition of the word and 2) a cryptic indication of the actual spelling of the word (but not necessarily in that order). Not all crossword clues take this form, but probably nine out of ten do. Remember, crosswords are word-games. They are about words rather than ideas, and much of what seems to be referring to ideas turns out to be referring directly to the words.

These references to words take many forms—anagrams, divided words, words that sound like other words, references to the actual letters in a word, words which are other words written backwards and so forth. Let us consider some of the different types.

Anagrams are probably the most obvious form of word-play. In the first crosswords they were indicated in the most obvious way, eg "Dance (anag.)," answer CANED. A more up-to-date crossword would put this in a subtler way, perhaps like this:

"Punished for round dance. (6)"

Let us look more closely at this clue, for it contains a great deal that we shall often find in crossword clues. Notice that it divides neatly into two parts. *Punished* is the straightforward definition, *round dance* is the cryptic allusion to the actual word, and they are joined by the conjunction *for* (i.e. one thing "stands for" the other). Other conjunctions are also legitimate: *and* would indicate that the two parts both indicate the solution, *or* would indicate that either one of them does, *but* could reasonably be used if there is an apparent contradiction between them. Note also that anagrams may be indicated in a variety of subtle ways. Any expression which may be taken as indicating, literally or figuratively, that the order of the letters has been changed may be employed. So words like *round*, *disturbed*, *troubled*, *muddled*, *mangled*, *boiled*, *mixed*, *version*, *form* et cetera may all be clues that the word before or after is an anagram. Note also that the clue tries to make a sort of narrative sense, but that this sense is a distraction from the real meaning of the clue. The general impression given by the clue is probably that some one has been or is being punished for taking part in a round dance, but of course the clue really means nothing of the sort.

Similar to the anagram is the reversed word as in the clue: "Return through Elim a considerable distance." (4). Here *return through* 'Elim' is an instruction to read the word ELIM backwards, giving MILE, which is a *considerable distance*. Words like *return*, *back*, *up* (especially in a "down" clue), *reverse*, *retreat* etc. may indicate a reversed word. Sometimes the reversal only applies to part of the word, so "Pen-

ny, go back for the pet! (3)" has the answer DOG: 'Penny' = D, *go back* = OG, while *the pet* is DOG. Note that the punctuation of this clue deliberately indicates the *apparent* meaning of the sentence, which is entirely normal in crossword clues. In interpreting the hidden meaning, punctuation must frequently be ignored. Sometimes even the spacing between words must be changed to get at the real meaning, as in "Roustabout makes sightseeing trips. (5)" The fact that a roustabout is a wharf-hand gives the "literal" meaning of the clue some colourability, however, the answer, TOURS is founded on the fact that *about* indicates an anagram of ROUST. The correct punctuation of the "secret" meaning would be "Roust, about, makes sightseeing trips," but punctuation is part of the clue's "disguise".

Many crossword clues refer directly to the parts of a word, for example: "Headgear on Bolshevišt creates loathing. (6)" The answer is HATRED. Headgear is a HAT, a bolshevišt is a RED and together they create HATRED, which is another word for loathing. "On" is literally true if the clue is a "down" one.

Clues may also refer to the individual letters of a word, and there are many ways of doing this. X, V, I, L, C and D, for example, are all roman numerals, so a reference to "fifty" often means L, and "a hundred" is often C. X may also be "a kiss". A can be "article", D can be "penny" or "copper", S, of course, is "shilling" or "bob", L is "pound". Quirinelle compilers may use "socially acceptable" for U, N, E, S and W are "points" or "directions". A to G are all "notes" or "keys". "Soft" or "quietly" may be P, and "loud" may be F. O may be "love", or "nothing", Y may be "why" and so forth. Here is a typical clue:

"Eager for a sixpence. (4)"

The answer is AVID, meaning "eager" and composed of A (a) VI (six) D (pence).

Groups of letters may be indicated in a variety of ways. An "artist" in a crossword clue usually means RA (Royal Academician). A "sailor" is AB, or he may be TAR. "The last word" could be AMEN, "former", "late", or "out of" may be EX. Foreign languages are often brought into play: "the French", for example can be LE, LA or LES, "very French" TRES. "Roman" may sometimes mean Latin, so "Roman way" might be VIA. The list of abbreviations in the back of your dictionary can prove helpful with this sort of thing, and it is important to use the right dictionary. More on this in a moment.

Another way of indicating groups of letters is by such expressions as *initial* or *initially*: "Old boy initially takes part of an act for the nature of Babylonian broadcasting. (7)" Here *old boy initially* gives us OB, while *part of an*

act (in a play) is SCENE. The two combined make the nature of Babylonian broadcasting which is OBSCENE.

Sometimes the whole answer is contained within part of the clue: "Chalk up points in tabasco red. (5)" is an example. The answer, SCORE, meaning *chalk up points*, is literally contained in *tabasco Red*. Look for words like *in, within, inside, embrace, contain, part* etc. as pointers to contained words. Such "contained-word" puzzles frequently occurred as games in themselves in Victorian periodicals ("how many rivers can you find contained in this paragraph")—an example of how the crossword is really a compendium of traditional word-games.

Puns and double meanings are a particularly English preoccupation. Shakespeare is full of them and so are crosswords. Words often mean something other than their more obvious sense, or may be used in two senses: "Metal press. (4)" has the answer IRON. The clue indicates two definitions of the word—a noun meaning a kind of metal and a verb meaning to *press*. More obscure puns may refer to a river as a *flow*er (something which flows) or even a *banker* (something with banks). Such contortions, you will be glad to hear are rare in the *Imperial Angel*. Do bear in mind, though, that words may not mean what they seem to mean. "Swallow flies up, and such an animal may. (13)" has the perhaps unexpected answer *insectivorous*. Most readers will assume that *swallow* is the noun and *flies* the verb, but in fact it is the other way about, giving quite a different meaning. Thus, what such an animal may do is not *fly up* (like a *swallow*), but *swallow flies up*. Note that the *and*, while not ungrammatical for the "secret" sense is designed to lead the mind toward the other sense. The *up* is also intended to aid the deception and is in itself a little pun, meaning not a direction as we were led to suppose but "thoroughly" or "properly" as in *eat up, speak up, clean up* and other such idiomatic expressions.

Another category of clue is the *sound clue*: "Bear witness—sounds like a trial. (6)" has the answer ATTEST which means *bear witness and sounds like A TEST—a trial*. Note how the apparent connexion of *witness and trial* really has nothing to do with the clue. A clever compiler can often contrive such false connexions. Sound clues are signalled by expressions such as *sounds like, we hear, is said to be, it seems etc.*

A good crossword clue should always allow you to deduce the exact solution from the information given. Just occasionally there may be a small ambiguity and two solutions might both fit. In such cases there will always be a letter or two from "crossing" words to make it clear which one is needed. Even difficult

crosswords will usually have one or two easy clues, so look for a few that will get you started, giving you a letter or two as a hint toward the more difficult clues.

The official Romantic dictionary (not only for crosswords but for all purposes) is the fifth edition of the Concise Oxford. This is a far-western Quirinnelle dictionary which contains everything one might want to know and is utterly traditional and sound on pronunciation, definition and what counts as real English. The fourth edition is almost equally acceptable. Earlier editions will lack some of the more dated material which one might need on odd occasions. One should try to acquire a copy of this dictionary. The sixth and subsequent editions should be avoided like the plague. The Sixth Edition was invaded by the Babylonian mind-manipulators. It contains deracinated cant, it is no longer sound on pronunciation, it contains many corrupt, politicised definitions, improper inclusions and improper exclusions. It will lead you astray in crosswords as it will lead you astray on words in general. Needless to say, subsequent editions become progressively worse.

Try to use the fourth or fifth edition of the Concise Oxford, as this is the one our compilers use and is the final arbiter on disputable verbal points.

If you do not have a Concise Oxford it is best to use a dictionary produced before the Second Modernist War, or at any rate before 1960 (the 5th edition of the Concise Oxford is actually a little later than this, but is sounder than many dictionaries produced 30 years earlier. That is why it is so ideal).

Words appearing in the solution will normally be words found in the Concise Oxford before the treacherous 6th edition. Other allowed categories are proper names, including names of well-known places, film stars, fictional characters and dance bands, and Romantic words and expressions known to our readers. *Angel* crosswords presuppose a reasonable standard of general knowledge and education, but not normally obscure or recondite learning. Occasionally they may require information given in the *Angel* itself.

When solving a crossword, look out for indicators of the different "tricks" discussed in this essay: but remember that the compiler will sometimes disguise them and even occasionally use misdirection to make you think of the wrong "trick". When in difficulty, remember to use what you know about the answer. An obvious example is, when you suspect an anagram, but do not know which word or words are to be scrambled, see which word or combination has the right number of letters for the solution. Less obvious dodges may be

used by studying the letters in the grid. If a word ends in *l _ G*, the chances are that it ends in *ING*—thinking along these lines may help you to the answer. If a word begins *H _ A*, you know that the letter in the middle must be *E, I, O* or *Y*. It cannot be a consonant, or another *A*, and if you look in the dictionary you will find no word beginning with *HUA*. If you are badly stuck you could scan through the dictionary. There are only a few words beginning with this combination and probably only one or two with the right number of letters in them. Again, if you can guess part of a word—that it ends in *ING*, for example, or that it is plural and therefore probably ends in *S*, or that it is the past tense of a verb, probably ending in *ED*, you can look at "crossing" words and see if your hypothesis helps with them.

And now we shall take you by the hand and lead you among the wonders of crossword-land. The gate is the little pink-and-black grid that you will find on the back of the last issue of *Imperial Angel*. We shall guide you through the solutions one by one.

CLUES ACROSS

1. Our home begins in *semper fidelis* and ends as twenty. (6)

Twenty could be *XX*, of course, but it is rare to have two *Xs* in a word. Actually it refers to 20 down, so normally you would have to wait until you had solved that clue. We shall cheat a little and tell you that 20 down is *IRE*. The solution to this clue is *EMPIRE*. The *EMP* is in *semper fidelis* and the *IRE* you know about. The *Empire* is the home of all Romanians.

2. Slid about to become too steady. (6)

Answer: STOLID. Literally *SLID about TO = S(TO)LID*, meaning too *steady*.

5. Foret, Delhi or South Wales. (3) An unusual clue, not falling into any of the common crossword categories. The answer is *NEW*, which might be prefaced to any of these words.

8. French dance final weight. (7)

Answer: BALLAST. *BAL (french dance) + LAST (final)* and meaning *weight*.

10. Sorcerers and Romantic ladies can then change. (7)

Answer: ENCHANT, an anagram of *CAN THEN*, indicated by the word *change*. Both *sorcerers* and *Romantic ladies* enchant, so the first part of the sentence is completed by "working out" the second.

13. Throbbing wildly, though no crooner is present, we make the first course. (5)

Answer: BROTH. *Wildly* indicates an anagram of *throbbing*, but that word is too long for the solution, and we are told that *no crooner is*

present, so we remove the king of crooners, *BING*, from *THROBBING* to leave *THROB*. This is anagrammed to make *BROTH*, which may be served as the *first course* at dinner.

15. The king of the trees lies enfolded in a cornfield. (5)

Answer: ACORN. *The king of the trees lies enfolded* is a poetic reference to the *acorn*, which contains within it the whole essence of the mighty oak tree. The word is literally contained in *A CORNfield*.

16. Bubble, boil which French angle? (7)

Answer: OBLIQUE. *Bubble* is an instruction to make an anagram of *BOIL* (although, of course, it could have been the other way about) giving us *OBLI*, while *which French* is *QUE (French for which)*. The two together make *OBLIQUE*, which is a sort of *angle*. The question mark, of course, belongs to the rudimentary "literal sense" of the clue and plays no part in its real meaning.

17. Arm with nothing to find a shady place. (5)

Answer: LIMBO. *Arm = LIMB* and *nothing = O*. *Limbo* is a place of shades, or *shady place*.

19. I enter on and on, bringing tears to the eyes. (5)

Answer: ONION. *ON + I + ON*

23. Now and here, make a civilised place that's wholly part of the late 20th century. (7)

Answer: NOWHERE. Ignore the comma and we see that *NOW + HERE* do indeed make up a place that cannot and does not exist.

25. Grope about the capital of the darkened world for the children. (7)

Answer: PROGENY. *Grope about* means an anagram of *GROPE—PROGE*. *NY* is the *capital of the darkened world*—New York city being the centre of the financial/commercial/political nexus which controls Babylon. The two together make a word meaning *children*.

27. French born maiden calling. (3)

Answer: NEE. *Née* is the French word for *born*, and in English is used to indicate a woman's maiden name. Note the pun on *calling*, which looks like a verb, but is here used in the slightly contrived sense of "appellation" (in itself a bit of a Gallicism!).

28. Made-up roads are; 'pop'-pushers and television producers should be. (6)

Answer: TARRED. Of course they are, and should!

29. Break free from Babylon. (6)

Answer: Secede. Most cryptic crosswords contain the occasional straightforward or un-cryptic clue.

CLUES DOWN

1. No longer a mangled rat but still an inessential player. (5)

Answer: EXTRA. *No longer = EX*; *mangled*

indicates an anagram of RAT = TRA. An extra in photoplays is an *inessential* player.

2. Being why I enter the round tent. (6)

Answer: ENTITY. 'Round indicates an anagram of TENT. Why and I represent the letters Y, I. Entity is an anagram of TENT with the letters Y and I added, meaning being.

3. Point out, point in, we live, turn, turn. (6)

Answer: SWIVEL. The first turn indicates an anagram of WE LIVE. However one (compass) point must be removed (E) and another added (S). We now get the letters which make up SWIVEL, a word defined by the second occurrence of turn.

4. A pointless design, yet it shews what Romantics do not do to mix with types. (5)

Answer: DEIGN. Remove a compass point (S) from DESIGN. Romantics do not DEIGN to mix with types.

6. Warning devices for racing pulses or weapons for the young? (11)

Answer: PEASHOOTERS. Literally, these are weapons for the young, but the whimsical humour of the crossword and the facility of complex punning comes into the first part of the clue. Since the crossword grid is blind to all spacing and punctuation, *peashooters* could be read as *peas' hooters*: warning devices which would be attached to the cars driven by peas as they raced about. 'Racing pulses, of course, usually bears quite a different meaning, but here *pulses* is used in the sense of leguminous vegetables.

7. Aeolian harp between arches and log cabin all begin and end with a question going back to the first times. (11)

Answer: ARCHAEOLOGY. Quite a complex clue, this. We have three elements in the first section of the clue: Aeolian harp, arches and log cabin. We are told that they all begin: i.e. we should take only the beginning of each word, and place the first between the other two. So ARCH + AEO + LOG. They end with a question: why = Y. Giving us ARCHAEOLOGY, which goes back to the first times (literally—arche meaning first).

8. Baby long-legs begins where the natives live. (7)

Answer: BABYLON. Simply the beginning of BABY LONG-legs, which is, of course, where the natives live.

9. King of beasts above us all. (3)

Answer: LEO, the lion in the sky.

11. The height of adoration: Shakespeare made much of it. (3)

Answer: ADO. The beginning, or "height", especially in a "down" clue, of ADORATION. The Shakesperian reference is obvious.

12. Nancy follows French and back for occupation of her rented house. (7)

Answer: TENANCY. French and is ET, the-

refore French and back is TE, which, followed by NANCY gives us a word meaning occupation of a rented house.

14. We hear it keeps elegant ladies warm—especially in the climes where it grows. (3)

Answer: FIR. A sound-clue. The thing we hear, that keeps elegant ladies warm is, of course, FUR. Fir-trees grow in cold climates where furs are needed.

18. Sounds like a witticism—it is certainly cutting! (3)

Answer: MOW. Another sound-clue: mow sounds like mot, a witticism. The aural connexion between the two ideas is supplemented by a neat piece of word-play.

20. Tip of the spire makes us like this word. (3)

Answer: IRE, the tip or end of spIRE. Ire makes us cross, which is like this word—a crossword.

21. Concerning the mental faculties: Plato tells us that the teaching of truth but does this to the soul. (6)

Answer: REMIND. RE (concerning) + MIND (the mental faculties). One should really know the Platonic and generally traditional doctrine of recollection: that all Truth is known by the soul, and all learning is remembering, but even if not it should still be possible to solve this clue.

22. Roman works. (6)

Answer: OPUSES. One thinks at first of something archaeological, but all we need is the Roman (i.e. Latin) word for works.

24. Stone-works for the assault. (5)

Answer: ONSET. Quite a different use of works. Here it is an indication that STONE is an anagram, giving ONSET, an assault.

26. Belong endlessly about aristocratic nature and bearing. (5)

Answer: NOBLE. Cut the end (G) off BELONG and take the word about as an indication that it is an anagram, giving us a word meaning aristocratic nature and bearing.

So now you know how to do it. Why not have a crack at the new crossword on the back of this Angel? Go on—before your confidence fades. Good luck, and welcome to crossword-land.

JUDY from p. 11

Very wise. But how does one decide which? Perhaps alternate Tuesdays. One should, of course, be strict but firm with children, as they are with us given the chance—even the most mystical among us:

"Mrs. Annie Besant, eighty-year-old theosophist, was confined to bed today at the home of friends in Wimbledon. A severe child forced her to cancel all lecture engagements."

Houston Chronicle

Traditional CHILDREN'S GAMES Studies

THE HIDDEN SECRETS OF TRADITIONAL PLAYGROUND RITUALS

IF any should doubt the possibility of the unbroken continuance of rituals, customs and practices over thousands of years, one need look no further than the nearest playground—at least, this would certainly have been the case until a decade or so ago. There one would have seen a hopscotch diagram virtually identical to the one inscribed in the pavement of the Roman Forum; one would have seen five-stones played in the manner shewn on ancient Egyptian inscriptions and hide-and-seek exactly as described by a classical Greek author.

Of course, one may still see such things in Babylon, but they are rapidly becoming rarer. Diagrams of newly-invented modern pseudo-hopscotch and ball games are permanently painted on the tarmac or concrete of many playgrounds in accordance with the modernist notion that children should have everything "done for them" by Big Brother and his representatives. Traditional games are increasingly forgotten as folk-memory of every sort withers under the impact of a synthetic, electronic culture and the latest screaming degenerate to be promoted by the Machine displaces thoughts and rhythms that have pulsed for ten thousand years and more through the hearts and limbs of the young.

This is a matter of more importance than may at first be apparent, for, as we shall proceed to demonstrate, many of these games have a significance of the utmost profundity, and while it may be argued that the children playing them have no notion of the depths involved, and that the metaphysical doctrines which they embody would be incomprehensible to the young even if they were explained, nonetheless a merely rational understanding is not the only way in which such things may be of value. At a deep level, since such ideas are fundamental to the human psyche and to the manifested world itself, such "enactments" have a very real effect of "centring" and racinating the individual within the cosmic and spiritual environment. While these games refer to initiatic mysteries which are, of their nature, far beyond any child, it is in the nature of traditional truth that every reality is reflected and re-enacted at various "microcosmic" levels—just as the year and the day are microcosms of the great cycles of time which span thousands of years, and ultimately of the great "night" and "day" of time itself, or as each house, and then each human being within it is a microcosm of the entire manifested cosmos.

The maintenance of tradition at various levels, and, in particular, the maintenance of certain depths of tradition which may have been lost to the higher levels of a culture at the "folk" level, is a vital part of the maintenance of the Golden Thread which connects every civilisation to the primordial Source. Furthermore, so long as this thread continues, even at the relatively "unconscious" folk level, it can be re-introduced into the main stream of a healthy tradition, just as, for example, the Grail legends and symbolism, preserved for centuries in western European folklore from the Celtic branch of the Indo-European tradition (whence they ultimately derive from the Primordial Tradition itself) took fresh root in the Christian tradition in the Middle Ages.

The progressive disappearance of traditional children's games, then, is yet another example of the thesis that a very radical breaking of the thread has taken place in the post-1960 period, and that vital links which continued to bind even the fundamentally untraditional world of the earlier 20th century (and, in a deeper sense, of the whole post-Renaissance) period to traditional reality have suddenly snapped, leaving the world drifting in directionless chaos.

Like "fairy tales", these games were not originally the exclusive domain of children, but were played by adults too. This is certainly a sign of the "simplicity" of more traditional people, in the spiritual sense of that word, but it is by no means an evidence of stupidity. On the contrary, the ability of the traditional adult to appreciate what are now called "children's games" is a demonstration of a deeper connexion, in some cases intellectual, in others merely "intuitive" (in the loose modern sense of that word), to the fundamental realities of being.—For the continuing fascination with these games stems from an ability on some level to understand and ritually enact their inner meanings.

It is entirely typical of an age so crass as to give the unqualified name of "science" to a mere collection of observations, calculations and experiments relating to material phenomena, and actually to persuade itself that this "science" represents the apogee of human knowledge, that it should utterly miss the point of these games and relegate them to the children's playground.

It is true that certain anthropologists have understood that the games have their origins in what they term "religious rituals", but

apart from the fact that they have no conception of the nature and reality of these "rituals", the notion is really little more than a half-truth. While in traditional societies there are specifically religious rituals which may be performed in churches or temples, there is no act of life which does not have a ritual aspect. The crafts, their tools, patterns and operations, all have a ritual—that is to say intellectual—dimension. Primarily they constitute an initiatic path whereby the craftsman may return toward the divine Centre of all being, achieving the highest degree of spiritual realisation that is possible to him in his earthly journey; secondly they were "reminders" of that Centre for the users of the artefacts produced. Only thirdly were they valued as utilitarian objects—or rather, their use and their beauty, that is to say, their practical and their intellectual use, were regarded as one and the same thing, with the intellectual aspect, insofar as it could be considered separately, being naturally the superior. It is only in a society which has wholly lost this intellectual perception that the factory system can be seriously considered as a "progress" over traditional craft.

By the same token, traditional games were not merely secular "entertainments", but had as their very core the ritual actualisation of that transcendent Truth which is the meaning and purpose of human life.

Human life, before all else, is a journey. For modernised humanity and for the animals it is simply a journey from birth to death, picking up as many material and emotional satisfactions as possible on the way. For traditional humanity it is a spiritual journey, leading the soul ever closer to the true Centre of being. This journey is made possible by the Path or Way provided by a sacred craft and by all the rituals, customs and institutions of an integral traditional society.

The game of hopscotch is an enactment of this inner journey of the soul. The oldest form of the game uses a spiral bed (see diagram 1). The spiral is one of the fundamental traditional symbols, depicting primarily the outward manifestation of the created world from the unmanifested Centre. The original spiral hopscotch bed, having twelve "Stations" is a map of the year, and therefore of the cosmos² and also of the "Great Year" (*Magnus Annus*), the fundamental time-cycle of cosmic manifestation. The twelve Stations correspond to the twelve months, or the twelve zodiacal mansions with the sun at the centre (the sun being often a representation of the Centre of being). The dividing lines, it will be seen, form a "rose of the winds" * radiating out from the centre. The upright cross + represents the solstices and equinoxes of Winter, Spring, Summer and

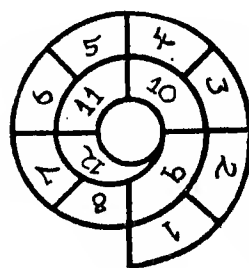


DIAGRAM 1

Autumn (Christmas, East-er^a, St John's Day (Midsummer) and Michaelmas); the transverse cross represents the cross-quarter days which fall midway between them (Candlemas, May Day, Lammas and All Hallows) X. The whole diagram represents the development of manifestation through a number of descending cycles, each one going through four phases: an age of Gold (Spring) of Silver (Summer) of Bronze (Autumn) and of Iron (Winter) with a final reinstatement of the Golden Age, but on a lower (i.e. further from the divine Centre) level, beginning a new cycle of descent⁴. The aim of the soul is to retrace this descent of material manifestation, finally transcending it in a full return to the Centre. The game is thus based upon this return, hopping through the twelve Stations to the centre of the bed. In some areas the game is called "Heaven and Hell", referring to the journey from the lowest or outermost point of the cosmos, the "outer darkness" of the Gospel, to the divine Centre, or "heaven".

The other main form of hopscotch is played in a long bed (diagram 2). While still a paradigm of the Way, it reflects a rather different symbolism. Instead of being a glyph of cosmic manifestation, it is a bridge between the hither and the nether shore; between this world and the transcendent realm. We may note that the "hither" end of the bed is a square section while the "nether" end is round—the square signifying consolidated matter and earth, the circle Heaven and Spirit. There are numerous variants of this bed, but the great majority have in common the alternation of single and double Stations—that is, those entered with one foot only and those in which the two feet are placed in adjacent squares. This is closely connected with the meaning of the word "hopscotch" itself—to hop a "scotch" or line. The cardinal rule of play is that one must clear each line without the foot crossing it at any point. This is intimately linked with the "perilous passage" or "clashing gates" motif so common in traditional literature⁵. The material

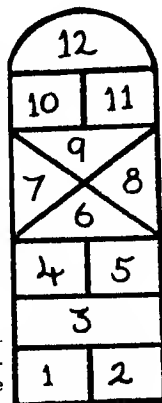


DIAGRAM 2

world is made up of pairs of illusory opposites which conceal the underlying spiritual Unity. The first of these and root cause of all others is the distinction between "self" and "other". At each passage one must transcend or "leap over" the clashing pair without being caught between them. The final aim is to transcend the ultimate duality and attain to the primordial Unity of the Absolute.—But there are numerous lesser dualities which must be confronted at each stage on the path. In "bridge" hopscotch we trace the initiatic process of perfectly balancing the two halves of a given duality (having one foot in each Station without touching a line) and then reconciling them into unity, then balancing a new duality at the next level, reconciling that and so forward. This encapsulates the thesis-antithesis-synthesis dialectic which can be traced back through "classical" to "prehistoric" times, was Christianised in the Middle Ages, misplaced by Hegel and mangled by Marx.

In many versions of hopscotch, the players have a soul-token of a Stone or potsherd, called a "potsie". This must be thrown accurately into the first square before beginning. Having successfully completed the course, the player throws it into square 2 and begins again, and so on until she reaches the final square. This process reflects the truth already implicit in the spiral bed: that each stage of the journey is a microcosm of the whole.

Many games are less complex in structure and in direct metaphysical import than hopscotch. Hide-and-seek, Tag and Blind Man's Buff, with their numerous variants are all based upon the pursuit of the Spirit by the soul, Stressing its different aspects (God as the Hidden Treasure, the blindness of the matter-bound soul etc.). What is lacking in metaphysical subtlety is compensated by a total concentration on the level of sheer physical energy. Nonetheless, behind the apparent simplicity of these games lies all the complex doctrine of the Sacred Hunt. An important feature of many of these games is that the hunter is rapidly transformed into the hunted and *vice versa*, reflecting the essential ambiguity between the hunt of the soul for the Spirit and of the Spirit for the soul (a matter too complex to enter into here, but which may be indicated by the consideration that, since it is only by the operation of God's grace in the soul that the soul seeks God at all, who can be said to be hunting whom?).

That aspect of the hunt which involves "hitting the mark" is enacted, *inter alia*, in the very ancient game of marbles—but a discussion of the various versions of this game would lead us into a consideration of ball games in general, which lies beyond the scope

of the present essay.

Fivestones, which, like hopscotch, has been played from ancient times in China and India as well as Europe, has too many versions to discuss in detail here; however, all of them involve controlling, or gathering together, the scattered elements of the fallen soul. The soul, in her primordial wholeness, sees only the divine Unity. It is only when she is fallen from that wholeness that she becomes entangled in the illusory multiplicity of the manifested world. It is literally true to say that the various powers and tendencies of the soul are scattered among the fragmented world of manifestation. The five Stones represent the four material elements plus the Quintessence (fifth element), aether or spirit. Since the soul of man is a microcosm of the universe, these five constituents of manifestation are also the elements of the soul. In some Eastern variants, a large number of seeds reflects the sheer multiplicity of the fragmented soul rather than numerologically expressing its microcosmic nature. In all five-Stones versions, the four are on the ground while the fifth, transcendent, element is thrown into the air (versions using a ball are not traditional). Thus it is only during periods of sustained contemplation, when the higher part of the soul "takes wing", that the lower elements can be gathered and disciplined. It is appropriate, then, that the game is one depending almost entirely upon unbroken concentration. The game reflects the Lesser Mysteries in which the aspirant returns to the integrated and fully human, State of Primordial Man before proceeding to the Greater Mysteries.

In the game of Follow my Leader, all players line up behind the leader and follow wherever she goes, imitating her actions exactly. If she hops, they will hop; if she touches a tree, they must all touch the same tree as they pass it, thus the leader enacts the part of the solar thread-spirit (*Sutratman*) who draws all beings like jewels upon a string, an image found in Plato, Homer, Dante, Hafiz, Chuang-tzu, the *Bhagavad Gita* and countless other traditional sources. In this game, the children are like the Balinese puppet-dancers—little girls who, allow their bodies to go exaggeratedly limp and soft, making every move in obedience to the audience's commands and seeming like jointed dolls upon strings⁶. Such a notion is far from being exclusively Balinese. Plato speaks of the "one golden cord" that we human puppets should hold on to and be guided by (*Laws* 644). Philo of Alexandria says of our five senses "all these, as in puppet-shows are drawn by cords by their director". In the word of Christ: "I do nothing of myself". Thus the doctrine of the *Sutratman* or

thread-spirit and that of *lila*—of all creation as the “play” of the spirit are simultaneously expressed in a ritual enactment of the pure soul’s perfect obedience to the will of God.

Another popular “obedience game” is Simon says (sometimes O’Grady says). The point of this game is that in any traditional order, no ruler, whether sovereign or householder, rules in his own right. As C.S. Lewis has pointed out, the idea that the king was an absolute sovereign with a Divine Right was a very new idea in the 16th century and a highly unorthodox one. Traditionally a sovereign rules because he obeys and embodies the Divine Law. As Ananda Coomaraswamy says: “In the traditional and unanimous society, there is a government by a hereditary aristocracy, the function of which is to maintain an existing order based on eternal principles, rather than to impose the views or arbitrary will (in the most technical sense of the words, a *tyrannical* will) of any party or interest”. A ruler is only to be obeyed when he is embodying the Divine Order. Should he cease to do so, and become “heretical”, he no longer commands obedience. Thus those Roman Catholics who hold that the Pope has become an heretical modernist declare that “the seat is vacant” (*sedes vacante*) because an heretical Pope is *ipso facto* no longer Pope (*Papa heretica est deposita*). Any lawful traditional ruler is so only because he is the direct representative of the Golden Thread, the Tradition: ultimately of God. As the Mohammedans say, “the Caliph is God’s viceroy on earth”. So, in this game, when the leader says “Simon says sit down” every one must sit down, but if he says merely “sit down” no one responds—or any who does is “out”. Only those commands which have passed lawfully down the Golden Chain, which are spoken from traditional authority, are lawful commands and should be obeyed. “Simon” here is probably Simon Peter, the founder of the Papal succession, while “O’Grady” may go back to an earlier tradition, the name being identified by some scholars with that of a Celtic deity.

Thus we may see that traditional children’s games are one strand of the thread that, until very recently, connected even the latest and most untraditional times with the primordial foundations of tradition. However little they may have been consciously understood, they constituted a profound and living link with the transcendent source of order and harmony.

They were one of the things—the many things—which helped to keep the world sane, because they kept it rooted in its rich and resonant heritage.

NOTES

1. Another point which should be considered is ➤

JUDY AGAIN?

YES it’s me again! What do you expect for a bob an issue—literature? So where were we? Oh, yes. Children. We note that:

Ensign and Mrs. William A. Clark have announced the birth of a son, Kenneth William on Oct. 6th. Montclair (New Jersey) Times

Yes, but *what was it?* We are never told. How frustrating. Perhaps the child will be entered for a prize at the local baby show on the same basis as a marrow, but if we do not know the measurement, how can we assess its chances? Oh well, let me leave you with a promise from an advertisement in *People’s Home Journal*:

This appliance will reduce your hips, or bust.

➤ the fact that, especially in relatively “modernised” times and places such as the Roman and (first) Elizabethan periods, these games, when played by adults, were largely played by women rather than men; and, of course, in school playgrounds to the present day, they are much more popular with girls than boys. This is connected with the “preservative” nature of the feminine principle and with the fact that the “private world” of the home, which is traditionally feminine, has been much more traditional than the masculine “public world” (one has only to look at so many Asian families with their beautiful traditionally-dressed women and their menfolk in jeans and garish jackets to see how this continues among traditional people in process of being undermined). This is another indication of the fact that the masculinisation of women and the abolition of the feminine through the grotesquely mis-named “feminism” adopted by all the organs of late-20th-century society is a vital element in the total deracination of humanity.

2. Vide Ren’ Gu’non, “Janua Caeli” in *Symboles Fondamentaux de la Science Sacrée*, Gallimard.
3. Easter, of course, is a movable feast based on the Jewish lunar calendar. It is nonetheless an equinoctial festival, falling on the first Sunday after the first full moon after the Spring Equinox.
4. This doctrine of the four Ages is found throughout the world from India to the Americas. We here use the terminology of the European tradition.
5. For a comprehensive study of the “perilous passage” theme in Greek, Hindoo, Christian, Germanic, Arabian, American Indian, Esquimaux and other traditions, together with an exposition of its metaphysical meaning, see Ananda Coomaraswamy, “Symplegades” in *Coomaraswamy, Selected Papers*, Vol. 1, edited by Roger Lipsey, Princeton University Press. For an exposition of the “perilous passage” motif in relation to the symbolism of the bridge see Donna Luisa Coomaraswamy, “The Perilous Bridge of Welfare”. *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* VIII (1944).
6. Vide Ananda Coomaraswamy, “Spiritual Paternity and the Puppet Complex” in *The Bugbear of Literacy*, London, Perennial Books.
7. Ananda Coomaraswamy, *Selected Papers*, Vol. 1, p. 291.

RACINATION

The Cure for the Disease of Babylon

It might seem a little like an advertisement for some quack medicine if we were to tell you that racination can increase your intelligence, cure your headaches and make you beautiful; but all these things are surprisingly true. Racination may not cure all your ills, but you will be surprised at how much happier, brighter, more attractive and more alive it will make you feel.

“Millions of men and women who, just twenty years ago, were decent, caring, community-oriented Christian people are now alchemically transformed into beasts who care for nothing but money and television.” Writes an American critic of Babylon*; and one is tempted to add: “and even those who criticise such things seem forced to couch their criticisms in such deracinated newspeak as ‘caring’ and ‘community-oriented’.”

Whether late-20th-century people were beasts may be open to question; but that they were stripped of a considerable portion of what would a short time before have been considered their inalienable human integrity is certain. When people voluntarily walked the streets wearing clothes emblazoned with tasteless slogans advertising commercial mass-products, like so many unpaid sandwich-men, there could be no question that they had lost something of themselves: that, at a very profound level, they despised themselves. When, instead of wishing to appear elegant, charming, dashing, gentlemanly or debonaire, people went to every length to appear sloppy, garish, casual, odd or drab, then it is clear that some very fundamental element of their selfhood had been undermined. We are dealing with a demoralised people; a *deracinated* people.

It was particularly noticeable in film actors and actresses. See them in the ‘30s and ‘40s; then see the same people in the ‘60s or ‘70s. It is not just that they are older. They have been undermined. They have given in to the strange, degenerative influences of the late 20th century world and become parodies of themselves. From the point of view of Romantia, they are no even recognised as the same people. The

*Michael A. Hoffman II, *Secret Societies and Psychological Warfare*. This book is available at \$9 including postage to Britain or Europe in U.S. funds or Sterling equivalent in cash. Be warned that the book includes a few quotations which contain indecent or scatological references.

younger ones are no different, except that they have never been anything but parodies.

People had been changed. Deeply and eerily changed. Not changed in ones and twos, but changed *en masse*. Changed in ways that were really rather creepy. People who had used real money for more years of their lives than they had used Babylonian pea-money pretended that they could not remember real money, and often became reſtve and worried when they were reminded, as if some deep wound were being probed. People vigorously defended the new order that had been forced on them, and then suddenly admitted that they really hated it. What had been done to them?

Mr. Hoffman, in our opening quotation, spoke of “alchemical transformation”, and these words may be taken rather more literally than one might at first be inclined to suppose. The use of symbolism and ritual drama by the electronic circus of Babylon, striking at the deepest roots of our unconscious and creating psychic change at levels far below our awareness was central to the techniques which were employed night and day by the Babylonian machine. Speaking of the great cultural severance of the early 1960s, Mr. Hoffman says: “Avant garde advertising, music, politics and news would hereafter depict (especially in the electronic media)—sometimes fleetingly and sometimes openly—a ‘shadow side’ of reality, an underground, amoral ‘funhouse’ current associated with extreme sex, extreme violence and extreme speed. . . . This mesmerising process produces a demoralised, cynical, double-mind.”

The influences which worked upon the inhabitants of the late 20th century, changing and de-centring them, were constantly present, attacking from a hundred angles. One tends to focus upon such obvious mind-control devices as television, ‘music’, advertising and ‘news’. These, indeed, were the main conduits for the ‘message’ of modernism, but virtually every manufactured object carried, in its form and design, the same ‘message’ of centreless confusion. The very materials from which they were made were chosen, unlike the synthetics of earlier decades, specifically for their impoverishing, proletarianising qualities (such materials were said to ‘complement modern design’ or to ‘have a contemporary feel’). From the fluorescent waistcoats thrown over policemen’s uniforms to the bright yellow colours of ‘reformed’ tennis balls to the jumble of computerised letters and numbers placed at the end of an English rural address, nothing was allowed to retain its normal, traditional colour and contours. Everything must be falsified, impoverished and marked with the stamp of the great Lie. Whether one looked at a shop

window or an omnibus; whether one went to a public house or to church or to school; whether one made a telephone call or took a train journey, everywhere the ugly, empty face of Babylon leered and gibbered at one; everywhere one was injected with another dose of the same old poison.

Its effects can hardly be overestimated. People of the late 20th century did not just think different thoughts and wear different clothes: they moved differently, walked differently, talked differently and had a different cast of face from the normal, rooted human beings they had been a short time earlier.

We speak of Babylon in the past tense, because from the standpoint of Romantia it is finished and done with, and yet it exists outside the walls of Romantia and has poisoned every one reading and writing this magazine to some degree. Any one who should say "I have not been poisoned" is simply indicating that he has been very poisoned indeed: so poisoned that he does not know it. Those who are most sensitive and most naturally resistant to Babylonian poisoning are the ones who notice it most. Those who are made ill (sometimes physically ill) by Babylon are the ones who are rejecting the poison from their systems as far as possible. Those who are complacently unaware of it are the ones who are ingesting it in large doses without even being aware of it. Any one who can watch Babylonian television without feeling ill is deeply poisoned. The fact that one knows what is wrong with it is no defence whatever against being poisoned by it, any more than understanding the effects of heroin enables one to take it without being damaged by it.

Of course we must get rid of the most extreme poisoning influences such as television and newspapers, but the ones we have been exposed to in the past will still have their residual effects: and almost everything we pass on the street will reinforce that residual poisoning. Every Babylonian motor-car, every shop, every advertising hoarding, every mother in absurd clothes, every grandmother in jeans is an attack upon the fundamental sense of harmony and *rightness* which is the basis of our psychic health. Every poisoned person is also, in some degree, a poisoner—just as every victim of a contagious disease is also a spreader of the disease—whether he be a designer of Babylonian artefacts, a journalist, a commercial artist or merely a wearer of grotesque clothes or a speaker of Babylonian cant. Even the "anti-modernist" who watches television and allows Babylonian phraseology to invade his vocabulary is subtly poisoning his hearers, even while he denounces the excesses of the post-1960 world. Indeed, his

poison is all the more effective for infiltrating the sensibility of those (including himself) who are trying to resist poisoning, for it seems to be coming from a "friendly" source. In short, we have been poisoned and we continue to be poisoned. All of us, without exception.

This is a gloomy reflection, no doubt; but no purpose is served by refusing to face the truth or pretending that it is otherwise. And having faced the truth we may begin to ask ourselves whether anything can be done about it. Can we cure the effects of the psychic poison which has been administered to us over the years? Can we protect ourselves from the effects of the poisons which will be loosed at us from every direction now and in time to come? Can we recapture the joy and innocence, the psychic health and heart's-vitality that is our birthright?

Fortunately, the answer to these questions is Yes. There is an antidote to the poison of Babylon. We can recover our true selves. The method by which this can be done is known as *racination*, because the fundamental nature of the Babylonian disease is *deracination*. Deracination means cutting off from the roots. People are cut off from their historical and traditional roots, from the roots of their selfhood. Babylonian thought and philosophy is cut off from its roots in the Primordial Philosophy. The design of artefacts is cut off from the roots of all design in to *kalon*—the transcendent principle of Beauty. A mother, a child, an artist, a policeman, a singer, a farmer and every other category of human being is cut off from his roots in the Archetype—the celestial prototype of his function. It is true that long before the severance of the 1960s, the doctrines which connected people to their Archetypal roots were largely forgotten: yet the sense of the Archetype, the fundamental root of things was still present.

Racination, then, is the process of restoring our roots and of freeing us from those influences which have been set in motion within us to eat away at those roots.

Racination is an inner journey; a path of discovery in which we find the self we should have been if we had never been poisoned—or selves, for Romantians often have more than one *persona*. Racination normally takes place in small groups where new Romantics support each other in throwing off the tentacles of the Octopus and rediscovering their real selves under the guidance of more experienced Romantians.

The chaos and disorder which dominates the world of Babylon also holds sway within each individual *psyche* which has been poisoned by it. Racination allows us to re-harmonise our inner selves, to regain the inner health and vitality which are natural to us. Racination contains many aspects of which we shall briefly indicate a few:

Conscience rectification: The Babylonian propaganda machine employs a great range of techniques (many of them more or less subliminal) to produce in its victims a state of *inverted conscience* which makes people feel guilty about what they should be proud of and proud of what they should feel ashamed of—in other words guilty about the extent to which we refuse to collaborate with the Octopus and proud of our acts of collaboration. This *conscience inversion* works at a quite subtle level, affecting even people who are consciously wholly opposed to the Octopus. It is a debilitating handicap which sets one part of the psyche against another and contorts the faculty of *conscience*, which is properly a part of our moral and spiritual nature into a hidden "enemy within", serving the profane, perverted and ultimately "diabolical" designs of liberal modernism. *Conscience rectification* can help us to recognise and eliminate these deeply implanted conditioned responses and be at peace with ourselves, freeing our inner energies for constructive purposes.

Refinement of sensibility is a process which helps us to recover the delicate, subtle sensibility which has been calloused and coarsened by Babylon. The New Sensibility of Romantia (especially associated with the province of Novaria) is too large a subject to enter into here—we shall have an essay on it in a future issue—but it may easily be understood that much of the poison of Babylon has to do with deadening the sensibility, saturating the *psyche* with extremes of chaos, garishness, absurdity and ugliness, callousing the heart to every sort of crudity, and directing the mind to the lowest things in every area, by which we mean not merely the morally low, but in all things, whether they be economic, political, philosophical or whatever domain they may pertain to, the emphasis is upon the gross, the sloganised; the materialistic and the utilitarian rather than the subtle, the refined, the intelligent, and the spiritual. The "utilitarian" outlook is, in fact, a fraud. After man has the most basic food, clothing and shelter there is nothing else he "needs". Everything else is there to satisfy our aesthetic senses, our symbolic perception, our desire for something higher and more refined. To deny our refined perceptions on the pretext of "utility" is simply to pervert and invert the whole function of civilisation. Only by a *refinement of sensibility*, recapturing the higher sensibility which is natural to human beings in all healthy times, can we return to our truly human and civilised nature.

Emotional revivification: Babylon deadens the natural emotions. Modesty and innocence and all the delicate sensations which depend upon them are destroyed. Romance of every

sort is thus extirpated from the human heart. Stronger and stronger stimulants, in the form of violent, erotic, grotesque and crude entertainments are required to produce reactions upon the jaded emotional palette of the poisoned Babylonian. Things that would have shocked the "fastest" flapper of the 1920s to the core of her being are accepted in a docile stupor by the most respectable Babylonian, and, we are afraid, by you. You cannot help it. You have been *calloused* over the years whether you would or no. *Callousing* and its cure is another subject in itself, but here we mention it only in relation to the deadening of the emotions. *Calloused* people do not have normal human emotions. The lack of trust endemic to Babylon (where "sexual freedom" in particular and many forms of "individual self-determination" are camouflaged terms for the freedom to betray, promoted by the Octopus in pursuance of his policy of *divide and rule*) also creates emotional death. The profound, unspoiled emotions found in normal human beings (and which you will find in almost any pre-revolutionary novel) are sullied and killed. Of course racination has nothing in common with the Californian-Style cult of "getting in touch with your feelings"—an eerily unidiomatic attempt to re-find emotion, akin to an attempt to speak informally in a language one has only learned from books, and symptomatic of the Strange *amnesia* induced by Babylon—racination can help to re-animate the true wellsprings of normal human feeling which have been contaminated or dried up by Babylon. For the sensitive, imaginative soul (and most people who are drawn to Romantism come within this category, even if these aspects of character have been somewhat "buried" by Babylon), *emotional revivification* can open a new world of profound and delicate feeling.

We have touched upon but a few aspects of racination. The methods used to achieve these ends are very various, including straightforward teaching; guided visualisation; individual and group exercises; watching "clips" from films with a view to increasing one's perception of certain aspects of racinated life and behaviour; analysing anything from an artefact to a piece of music in order to understand precisely what constitutes a racinated (or deracinated) cultural entity in all manner of aspects; dramatic work with personalities and aspects of personalities in order to discover and release one's true, unpoisoned self. All this (and much more) must, of course, go hand in hand with bringing one's personal life more fully into Romantia in a variety of ways. Here again, belonging to a racination group can be a source of help, advice and support.

Racination is an important undertaking. The



FASHION

IF you have fashion, what happens to individuality? This is the question asked by one of our readers, and it is worth thinking about.

Does fashion make us less individual or does it enhance our individuality?

The whole question of individuality in dress is a rather complicated one in any case. Late 20th century people often used to talk about it, but did they really have it? Schoolchildren used to say (or rather, certain adults who ran the broadcasting services used to say, and the schoolchildren used dutifully to repeat it) that they did not wish to wear school uniforms because they wished to express their individuality. As soon as the uniforms were abolished, they all came to school in the same jeans, tee-shirts, training shoes, or whatever happened to be fashionable at the time. Another uniform, in fact, but this time one imposed not by the school but by the manufacturers, the advertising industry and the electronic mind-manipulators.

Adults in the late 20th century had rather

Octopus has spent a great deal of time and unimaginable amounts of money upon perverting you from your true course and your real self. The process has been going on since the early 1960s or since the day you were born, whichever is the later. You have been the victim of the most sophisticated mass mind-control techniques ever devised, applied by every possible technical means through every agency of a highly-centralised hyper-politicised plutocratic social order. Undoing the expensive and carefully-planned psychological tampering that has been performed on you and freeing you to be what you really are is not a task to be underestimated: but it can be done, and doing it can be a pleasant, exciting and fasci-

more variety in dress, but much less than they imagined. If any girl visits Babylon dressed in any Romantic fashion, from crinolines down to a simple dress with white gloves and a neat little hat, she will immediately be noticed and seen as different from the Babylonians. This in itself demonstrates that there is a narrow range of "permitted" Babylonian dress. Babylonians may be too close to their own fashions to know exactly what Babylonian dress is, they may not even realise that there is such a thing as Babylonian dress, but they all know what Babylonian dress isn't, which proves that there is such a thing, and that it is very clearly and narrowly defined.

As a matter of fact, there never has been and there never will be a time and place wherein human beings live together in which there is not a certain expected style and range of dress. The idea that there might ever be "complete individuality" is simply one of the many illusions of Babylon, and is a small illustration of the way in which the pretence of "total freedom" was really only another way of chaining people to the Babylonian outlook and the Babylonian way of doing things.

Babylonian fashions, like all fashions, had a meaning: they displayed the human form in a particular way. They said something about the condition of the people who wore them. What Babylonian clothes said was: "we are people who do not have a very high regard for ourselves. We do not belong to ourselves, but to a vast, faceless system of control and propaganda, and, dwarfed to insignificance by that vast system we feel small and weak and childish and rather absurd." This was particularly obvious with the "casual" clothes which were seen on people of all ages—clothes which made every one look like a tramp, a clown or a mixture of the two, and were the quintessential expression of the disrupted sensibility of the late 20th century—but it was clear also in the better clothes worn chiefly for business

nating process. One in which you will make new friends and find new joy and vitality in life.

It might seem a little like an advertisement for some quack medicine if we were to tell you that racination can increase your intelligence, cure your headaches and make you beautiful; but all these things are true. A deracinated mind cannot be truly intelligent, a deracinated face cannot be truly beautiful, and many of the ailments which trouble us are the result of having a *psyche* divided against itself and in the grip of a dark and deadening power. Racination may not cure all your ills, but you will be surprised at how much happier, brighter, more attractive and more alive it will make you feel. For details, telephone the *Romantian Embassy*.

purposes: there was a certain cheapness about them. Even when such Imperial Styles as double-breasted jackets were copied, they seemed flat and dull and had nothing of the style and *elan* of their Trentish and Kadorian originals. This was partly owing to the way they were made and partly to the way they were worn. They were not the clothes of gentlemen, in the way that every reasonably dressed man in Trent regards himself as something of a gentleman—just as the cars of Babylon were not the cars of gentlemen—even the most expensive of them. They were the expression of a proletarianised world in which every one, from the dustman to the chairman of what the Babylonians termed a "multi-national company", was a rootless proletarian, utterly dependent on the system and with no inner dignity or *centredness*. Even when Babylonian girls tried to dress in a Romantic manner, the rather sloppy way in which they tended to do it (floppy clothes, tights, lack of make-up and glovelessness being typical symptoms) indicated the same fear of true dash rooted in the same fundamental proletarianisation and lack of self-esteem.

Elegance, glamour, dignity, charm, all the things which give the individual a sense of worth and healthy pride, a sense of her value as an individual: these were precisely the things which were stripped away from the fashions of Babylon—and all in the name of "individuality", "self-expression" *et cetera, et cetera*. Truly the Octopus is a master of irony.

So what, to return to our original question, of Romantic fashion? Does it rob us of our individuality simply because it is a style and a standard? How can it, since every one, whether she is aware of it or not, is always conforming to a style and a standard of dress? The questions to ask are: a) Does the style give us room for individual expression and b) Does it enhance us as individuals?

The answer to a is: Yes. Much more than Babylonian fashion, or, come to that, any other style, for Romantic style is not just one style but many, from the most elaborate crinolines and bustles of Arcadia, to the almost-Babylonian-but-still-human styles of Quirinelle, through every variation of Trentesque glamour, Vintessian jinkiness, Novarian boldness, Kadorian conservatism; there is hardly a shade of personality, not a nuance of individuality that is left without an avenue—without lots of avenues—of expression in Romantic. You can even be drab if you really want to—Kadorian drab, Vintessian drab, Quirinelle drab, take your pick—and none of them have the neurotic nastiness of the poisoned drabness of Babylon; all of them have a certain wistful charm. Of course there are a few rules and standards

JUDY AGAIN, AGAIN?

AGAIN? Well, it can't be helped, I suppose. We were talking about advertising, were we not? Curious, is it not, how some advertisers give themselves away?

I bought a few of your indigestion tablets last week. Now I feel a new man. (Original may be seen on request).

Advert. Sheffield Star

You see? It is a swindle. There were two of them all along, and they dare to brag about it. It is disgraceful! They have absolutely no respect for the public. They must think they are in Babylon. Listen to this:

Although sub-standard you will be delighted with these lovely stockings.

Daily Express

Sub-standard? How dare you, sir! We all know where to find sub-standard people, but they will not buy your stockings. They have a special kind of sub-standard hosiery to match themselves. But this all seems a touch risky. Not as risky, however, as some advertisers:

Something New which No Motorist Should Be Without. We offer you THE SELF-GRIP WENCH.

Advert. in motoring paper

Well really! You would think the claps could summon up the energy to grip her themselves, would you not? But of course! They need to keep their hands on the wheel. These inventors think of everything. I wonder whose face she slaps? Perhaps nobody's—rather an indelicate sort of girl, she sounds to me. Now, if I were a chap out to buy a lady I should prefer an advertisement like this:

The — Woollen and Silk Shop will be delighted to supply prospective brides by post (add 1s. 6d. for postage, packing).

Vanity Fair

—but then every one obeys rules and standards (or anti-standards), even poor Babylonians who have no idea that they are doing so.

As to question b): Does Romantic Fashion enhance us as individuals? Of course it does. It gives us back the *centredness*, the charm, the glamour, the sense of ourselves as real, valuable individuals that Babylon takes away. Just as Babylonian fashion is specifically designed to trivialise and impoverish the individual, so Romantic fashion is designed to enrich and nourish her. Babylonian clothes are clothes for the lost and rootless, the isolated and atomised, the poisoned and neurotic. Romantic clothes are clothes for the whole and the free, the charming, the secure and the happy.

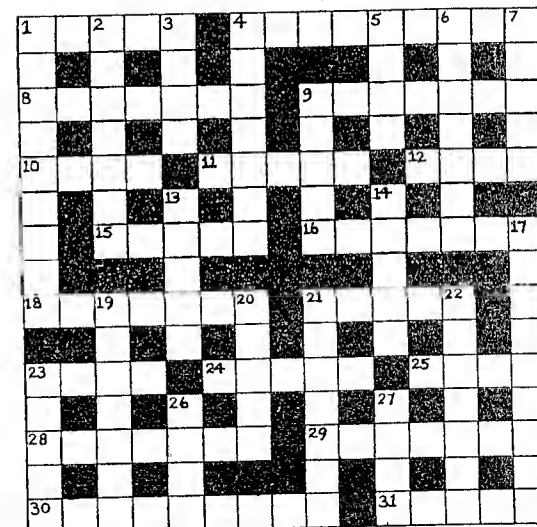
ANGEL CROSSWORD

ACROSS

1. To rent—nothing excluded—the heartland of Romantia. (5)
4. Fix mother-part, though the dialogue is meaningless. (9)
8. Rummage a hundred attics for skillful devices. (7)
9. Elongate short German Street to engrave. (7)
10. Behold! Behold an assent no Romantic will give. (4)
12. Peri makes a new spell which enables us to dance above the water. (4)
16. Sauce boat up. (7)
18. Walk doggedly in Western waters and blow up. (7)
21. Boojum bought a big fellow inside. (5)
23. A penny at the end of all the battles—keep it safe! (4)
24. The quality of no. 16 (bit cheeky, this). (5)
25. Write mechanically to dreadful Babylonian (4)
28. The last word troubled by the first number, making the wind flower. (7)
29. Soft sip mixed into pie makes a bright girl. (7)
30. Late over German insect, but extravagantly happy. (9)
31. Modernists destroy all, including the special nature of the sovereign.

DOWN

1. Small bird in poor health took solid food to excite feeling. (9)
2. Place within two points nearby. (7)
3. One of a pair in the East wind. (4)
4. Spectre routed out of Babylon. (7)
5. Race round a large measure of ground. (4)
6. Vocative saint, wealthy as a running bird. (7)
7. The fifth element thereabout. (5)
9. Quiet the rescue-boat, a predator lurks in the water. (5)
13. Roman light, French gold, Egyptian village. (5)
14. In the best umpired matches it may be knocked over. (5)
17. Bit by bit the Church comes between the pie and the occasion of its consumption (9)
19. Mixed-up raven is a *nouveau riche*. (5)
20. Rub out the first letter in Highland Gaelic. (5)
21. Knave gets top-up and hits it for a big reward. (7)
22. Do say yes! But if you drop the article and take back every word it will prove to be a long and eventful journey. (7)



23. We may hear a loud howl from a large creature (very large—over twenty-one). (5)
26. Eton used to set it, but in the late 20th century only muddled it. (4)
27. Give blows and take raps back. (4)

YET MORE JUDY

“Prospective,” exclaimed my friend M’Tavish on seeing this, “what do they mean ‘prospective’? Suppose ye paid wan and suxpence on postage and she turned ye doon?”

Well, I suppose that is a hazard. Buying on approval, they call it:—you don’t keep the goods unless they approve of you. I wonder if I scent another swindle here. . .

Of course private advertisements are often no better:

LOST, Tabby cat, male, answers to John. Reward (one black eye).

Devonshire Paper

With a reward like that I doubt if they will ever get the creature back. Or take this:

WANTED—mincing machine, large size—particulars and price to Manager, —’s Laundry Ltd.

Hertfordshire Paper

No doubt this is an American laundry:

American laundries make ours seem like amateurs. Shirts are returned beautifully ironed, each piece wrapped separately in a transparent envelope.

Sunday Pictorial

Well, that really tears it, as they say. It also wraps it up; at least until the next Angel.